

Lectures on the life of Peter

Part 8

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[00:00:01] Let us turn to the 22nd chapter of Luke and we'll read from verse 61.

We're going to speak tonight on Peter's restoration. We spoke the last time, last day afternoon, on his fall. And so we start off with the 61st verse, 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.

In connection with Peter's fall, we saw that this was not something that came suddenly.

[00:01:06] There was a course of events that led to Peter's denying the Lord, starting, according to the record, with his boastfulness, when the Lord reminded him that all were going to be offended in him that night, and also that Satan had desired to have the apostles that he might sip from the sweet. And so we find these various steps down until Peter does exactly what the Lord said he would do. He denies the Lord three times. And it says in the 60th verse, when he denies the Lord three times, when they charged him with being the Lord's disciple, it says, man, I know not what thou sayest.

[00:02:06] And it says in one of the other gospels in Matthew, it says he began to curse and to swear, and then the cock crowed. And at that moment when the cock crowed, it says the Lord turned and looked on Peter. We were explaining in the last meeting the layout of what it seems to us was the layout of the high priest's house, with an entrance, a vestibule going in from the street, a large open courtyard or patio, and then various rooms leading off that. And one of these rooms, no doubt, was the room where the Lord was on trial, and possibly not even any doors between them, so that to where Peter was [00:03:03] out in the courtyard where the fire was kindled and the high priest's servants were warming themselves, there was a clear view right in there where the Lord was standing. And I believe what must have happened was that when Peter denied the Lord and realized what he'd done, he would instinctively look toward the Lord, and at that very moment the Lord turned and looked on Peter, and their eyes would meet. I've thought sometimes what kind of a look the Lord gave Peter, because it says the Lord turned and looked upon Peter, and Peter remembered the word of the Lord. Right at that very moment when the cock crowed, and then the Lord's look, those two things together, Peter remembered what the Lord had said. [00:04:02] I believe it was a look of compassion. I believe it was a look that said to Peter, I'm doing all this for you, Peter, and you've denied me. It must have been the look that melted Peter's heart, as he realized the terrible thing that he'd done, the very thing that the Lord said he would do, but he denied the Lord when he should

have been there confessing him and not being ashamed of it. But I believe that this look of the Lord is the first step in Peter's restoration, the Lord's look. And you know, if we get away from the Lord, the Lord is looking on us, and I don't believe the Lord looks on us with anger if we deny him. He looks on us with pity. The Lord had said to Peter, I have prayed for thee, when he told Peter before his fall that the Satan desired to have them, that he might [00:05:04] sit them as we desire. I prayed for thee, Peter. The Lord had prayed for Peter in anticipation of this very thing that Peter had done. And the Lord's look is really, you might say, the confirmation of the prayer that he's already made for Peter. And so the Lord's look, as the Lord looks on him, it's the first step in Peter's restoration. The second step, I believe, is what follows.

Peter remembered the word of the Lord. He remembered what the Lord had said. The whole thing came back to him in that instant. All what the Lord had said to him, and how the Lord had said that the cock wouldn't crow twice before he denied him thrice, and how he had denied the Lord these three times, all of this came back to Peter. He remembered the word of the Lord. And as he remembered the word of the Lord, he would no doubt remember not only that the Lord [00:06:05] says that you'll deny me, but the Lord had said, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. Because at that moment, Peter would just feel like giving up the whole thing altogether. That his faith would fail him. And the Lord says, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. So Peter would be remembering all of these different things that the Lord said. And there we get, we might say, a second step in Peter's restoration. He remembers the word of the Lord. And the third step is, Peter went out and wept bitterly. He went out, he found a lonely place, and he wept. He wept bitterly. However could I have done it, thought Peter. He just showed so ashamed of himself, to think that after all the company that he'd had with the Lord from [00:07:03] the time of his conversion, right up to that time, of all the Lord's love that he'd shown, all the Lord's patience, and that now in the very, at the very time when he should have been faithful to his Lord, and he should not have been ashamed to confess his Lord, that he's denied it. But you see, these were tears of repentance. These were true tears of repentance. He went out and wept bitterly. And I believe that with repentance, there must always be tears. Now they mightn't be physical tears. You know, some people very much more easily move to tears than others.

And you find some people that they're very sorry about things they've done, but the tears both come to them so easily. But at least there should be tears in the heart. That is, and that's what it [00:08:05] was with Peter, I believe it was both. The tears that streamed from Peter's eyes were really the expression of the sorrow of his heart, as Peter was truly sorry and truly repentant, as he realized the enormity of what he had done, that he had denied his Lord right at the time that he should not have been ashamed of it. Peter went out and wept bitterly. Yes, he was. There was true repentance. It was godly sorrow, as we mentioned the other night with Peter. It was godly sorrow that worked repentance unto salvation, that is, unto his restoration. And it wasn't a godly sorrow not to be repented of. It was repentance from the heart. You know what happened to Judas with Judas? It was the sorrow of the world at work of death. I believe the sorrow of Judas was [00:09:01] the sorrow of remorse, and the Lord didn't say he'd prayed for Judas, because Judas wasn't one of the Lord, but Peter was. And so there was godly sorrow, and Peter is truly repentant. This is a further step in Peter's restoration. We turn over to the 24th chapter. We don't get any further mentioned about Peter in the meantime. We have the account of the Lord's trial, the final days of his trial, the final moments of his trial, the Lord's being led away to be crucified, his being crucified, and his death, and his burial. But when we come over to the 24th chapter, we get the Lord's resurrection. He's risen from the dead. And it says in verse 10, it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the disciples. These are the women who

went to the sepulchre, and they found the stone rolled away. [00:10:05] They went to anoint the Lord, and the Lord had already risen. And the stone was rolled away, and the angel spoke to them and told them to go and tell the apostles what had happened. And so they went and told them. But it says in verse 11, their words seemed to them of idle tales, and they believed them not. Then arose Peter and ran unto the sepulchre, and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed in himself, wondering of that which was come to pass. Now, I want to turn over for a minute to John's gospel, to the 20th chapter of John, where we have the account also of this first day of the week. And we'll read from the first verse. Then the first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark [00:11:05] unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, that was John, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. You notice that in the end of the 19th chapter, when it refers to the Lord, it refers to him as Jesus. But in the 20th chapter, it refers to him as the Lord. And it's very important to see that as long as the Lord was on earth, they called him Master and Lord, but he's referred to as Jesus. But the moment he's risen from the dead, they speak of him as the Lord, and we should speak of him as the Lord. It's not a good sign when you hear Christians always just referring to the Lord [00:12:01] as Jesus. He's the Lord Jesus. We give him the title that belongs to him in respect. They have taken away the Lord, she says, out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter, therefore, went forth from that other disciple and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together, and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came forth to the sepulchre. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying, yet went he not in. Then come of Simon Peter, following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture that he must rise again from the dead. Now we might say, hadn't the Lord told them time and again that he was going to rise from the [00:13:02] dead, and rise from among the dead? Yes, yes. It says that they didn't know it. I think this means up to that time they hadn't realized it. Now they did. Now they had the evidence.

They run to the sepulchre, John and Peter. John gets there before Peter. Possibly he was a younger man. I don't know. Scripture doesn't say so, although it's supposed to be that John must have been the youngest, because he lived a very, very long time after the Lord's death.

Of course, that could have been to a great old age, because the Lord told him that he might, told Peter that even if John lived until he came again, what was that for him? But at any rate, John gets there first. But John doesn't go in. He looks in, but when Peter comes, he goes right in. And they see, and then John comes in, and they see the evidence of the resurrection. Now what was the evidence? What did they see when they looked into that sepulchre? [00:14:05] I believe, brethren, that they saw these linen clothes that had been that had been wrapped around the Lord's body, lying there just like a chrysalis.

And the napkin that was about his head would be wrapped in the place by itself. You see, when Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus buried the Lord, it says they took the linen cloth and they took all of this about 100 pounds weight of spices, and they wound this cloth around the Lord as the manner of the Jews was to bury. They would be wound around his leg, each leg separately, each arm separately, and wound all around the body. And with all of these spices that were in it, this cloth would be like as if you wound something, a cloth round that had [00:15:07] been starched, so that when the Lord disappeared out of it, the shape of the body was still there.

That's what they saw. They saw the clothes that the Lord had been wrapped in, the stiff linen cloths that the Lord had been wrapped in, just like they were when they were wrapped around him, that the body had disappeared. The Jehovah's Witnesses say it dissolved into gases because they don't want to believe in the resurrection. The Word of God tells us that the Lord rose bodily and he was there and came there and spoke to Mary Magdalene. And we have ample evidence in the Gospels that the Lord was risen from the dead. Over 500 brethren saw him at one time.

[00:16:01] And when Paul wrote to the Corinthians, over half of them were still alive, because he says the greater part remain under this presence. That means over half of them were still there and could have been spoken to and given their testimony at that time. There's ample evidence as 1 Corinthians 15 sets out of the resurrection of the Lord. They believed that he was risen from the dead. They didn't know up to that time, but the Lord had hadn't gone home to them. And I think this is what we might call the fourth step in Peter's resurrection. He realized that the Lord was risen. He realized that the Lord was alive. He realized that his Lord that he denied was not dead, he was a living Lord. And he was going to have the opportunity of getting this whole matter set right. What a lovely thing for Peter to lay hold of this truth. And what a wonderful truth it is for us to lay hold of, beloved, that we have a living Savior. That's the great strength of the Christian, of our Christian belief. Every time we have a funeral [00:17:06] of one of the Lord's saints, one thinks, if this were all laying the body in the grave, if this were all how sad we'd be. Of all men most miserable, because we'd just be believing a myth. We'd be deceiving ourselves. But thank God it's not all. As the Lord rose from the dead, every one of his own is going to rise from the dead. And so we reverently lay away the mortal remains of our dear brothers and sisters, as the Creed puts it, in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection. It's a sure and certain hope, no doubt about it. As the Lord was raised from the dead, Christ the firstfruits, as 1 Corinthians 15 says, afterwards, later the Christ that is coming. So Peter really lay hold upon the precious truth that the Lord was risen [00:18:04] again from the dead. Now to come back to Luke's Gospel, we have a further thought in connection with Peter's restoration, and this is what we might call the fifth point. In Luke 24, and in Luke 24 we have the two that walked to Emmaus, and how the Lord met them. And then, when the Lord made himself known to them in the breaking of bread, they get up that same hour and return to Jerusalem. It says in verse 33, and they rose up the same hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and then that were with them, saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. In the 16th of Mark, we have a little note there, we needn't turn to it, in the seventh [00:19:01] verse, we have a little, as I was saying the other night, Mark gives us little incidents that are not recorded in the other Gospels. It's very precious to see that the Lord has led Mark to refer to a number of things that we don't get anywhere else. Mark says that the Lord said to the women, Go and tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee. Why does the Lord have and Peter? I think that that was because Peter might have doubted whether the Lord would ever own him as a disciple again. Peter thought, well, I denied the Lord, can I ever be now one of his disciples? I have forfeited all claim to be an apostle now. So the Lord says, you tell his disciples, but don't leave Peter out, and Peter. Tell that Peter now, that I'm going before them [00:20:02] into Galilee. I expected to see him there with the rest, and Peter was there too, as we're going to see. And here we have then that the Lord appears to Peter. I like to call this Peter's private restoration. We're not told what went on, but the Lord made a special appearance to Peter. He gave Peter a special interview. The Lord appeared to Peter alone, and Scripture hasn't recorded what went on. What Peter said to the Lord, or what the Lord said to Peter. It is a very important lesson in this for all of us. If we get away from the Lord, if we do something that's dishonored the Lord, we've got to have a private interview with the Lord. Our brethren can say all kinds of things to us that's necessary to say, and we can say all kinds of things to them that might be necessary to say. But there's one thing above [00:21:05] all that's

necessary first of all, and that is that we get alone with the Lord, and speak to the Lord. That's what Peter did. The Lord gave Peter an opportunity to get the things put right, and no doubt with him was put right. Peter owned before the Lord his mistake, and confessed it. And the Word says if we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And the Lord forgave Peter. So Peter now, as far as his personal relationship with the Lord was concerned, his fellowship with the Lord was restored. So there we get what we might call the fifth step in Peter's restoration. Now let us turn back again to John's gospel, and we have two more steps there that I want to refer to. Back in John 21, this time.

[00:22:08] In the 21st chapter of John, we read from the first verse, because we get Peter mentioned here several times. After these things, Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and on this wise showed he himself. You see the Lord had said to them, after I'm risen, I'll go before you into Galilee. And this is in Galilee. This is up at the Sea of Tiberias, which is the Sea of Galilee. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Canaan in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, James and John that is, and two other of his disciples. We're not told who they were. Simon Peter said unto them, I go a fishing. [00:23:01] They say unto him, we also go with thee. They went forth and entered into a ship immediately, and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was come, was now come, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus said unto them, children have ye any meat? They answered him no. He said unto them, cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved, said unto Peter, it is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he got his fish's coat unto him, for he was naked, and he cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in the little ship, for they were not far from land, but as it were, two undercubits, dragging the net with fishes. And as soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish lay there on [00:24:02] and death. And Jesus said unto them, bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three. And for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. Now there are several things here that speak to us.

Peter and the others were waiting for the Lord, and maybe they got tired of waiting. Peter was an impetuous fellow, as we know. He got tired of waiting around, and he said, well maybe I'm going fishing, he says, going back to his old occupation. Not that there was anything wrong with fishing, because that was the work that Peter did before the Lord called him to preach. But it does seem a little stepped down, that he's gone back to fishing for fish, when he should have been there waiting for the Lord. Anyhow, the others, when Peter says, I go fishing, the others, they say, [00:25:05] well we'll go with you. So there's Thomas and Nathanael, and James and John, that's four, and two others, that's six of them go with Peter, seven all together. The other apostles, if they were there, they didn't go. These went. What happened? They toiled all night, and they caught nothing. When morning comes, there's the Lord standing on the shore. He's come as he said he would. They didn't recognize him. And the Lord says, cast the net on the right side. He says to them, he says, have you any meat? They said no. Have you caught any food, that is? No. You haven't caught any fish? No. Cast the net on the right side. So they cast the net, and immediately they get a great multitude of fishes. What would this remind Peter and John of? Why, of course, that time that the Lord calls them to get the great multitude of fishes, [00:26:04] there when Peter was called to preach the gospel in the first place, as we saw when we were looking at Peter's call. And John recognized that it was the Lord. You see, John's always a little closer to the Lord than Peter is. John says, it's the Lord, he says. And when Peter heard that it's the Lord, he couldn't get to the Lord quick enough. He says he cast his fish's coat

about him because he was naked. I think that means he just had apparently just their underclothes on when they were hauling all these fish in, and so he wanted to be respectable. He put his fish's coat around him and cast himself into the sea to get to the Lord. You know, I think this is what we might call another step in Peter's restoration. In contrast to Peter's following afar off. You see, in his fall we saw Peter followed afar off. John went into the high priest's palace and Peter follows afar off, and John has to ask him to go in. [00:27:07] But here, he's not following afar off. He wants to get as near to the Lord as he can.

He's been restored to the Lord privately, and now he wants to keep near the Lord. It's been a little lapse, as it were, that they went away fishing there and they didn't get anything. But now the Lord gives them the great multitude of fishes, and even the net wasn't broken. A lovely picture. Some think this is a millennial scene, a title, millennial scene, where the net won't be broken, but where all the fishes of the corps will be brought to land. And then the Lord says, come and dine. When the Lord says, bring of the fish into your corp, Peter hauls in the fish himself, and then the Lord feeds them. Come and dine, he says, and none of them ask him who he is. They all know who he is. He must have looked somewhat different in his resurrection body, [00:28:05] yet they all recognize it was the Lord. And then when the Lord has fed them, and they're all satisfied and comfortable, because they must have been pretty hungry, you know, they toiled all night, worked hard all night and caught nothing. Then the Lord speaks to Peter. Now this is what we can call, this is the seventh point, and this is what we can call Peter's public restoration. Peter denied the Lord publicly, so he had to make a confession publicly also to be restored. I believe we have a principle here, brethren, which regards, this even comes in connection with the assembly, that if a person has dishonored the Lord publicly, there must be both a public, there must be both a private restoration and a public restoration. You know, sometimes people say, well, if I did [00:29:03] wrong and I confessed it to the Lord, what else should I do? Well, if the wrong which is done has been known publicly, you should let it be known publicly that you've been restored. That's why if a person has to be put away from the assembly, and it's a public act in their having to be put away, it has to be publicly announced that they're being received back. And if a person's truly restored to the Lord, they'll never resent that, but rather be glad that the brethren have the thing is settled, and that the brethren are satisfied and able to receive them back. But people shouldn't just sneak in. I've seen cases where this has been omitted, and the person has never really been right. They've never really been, they never seem to have gotten to the bottom of the thing that was wrong in the first place. And we get a precious lesson here, where Peter has to publicly, before the others, undo the very wrong thing that he'd done when he [00:30:04] denied the Lord. So the Lord says to Peter, Simon son of Jonas, love us thou me more than these. What's the Lord mean when he says, love us thou me more than these? Do you love me more than the rest of the apostles, Peter? Because that's what he said, you know. He says, though all be offended, yet will not I. Peter had really said, Lord I love you more than all the others, because even though all the others are going to be offended in you, I'll never be offended. It was really very boastful, as we saw when we were studying this fall. So now the Lord says to Peter, do you love me more than these others, Peter? Peter says to him, yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. But in our authorised version we don't get the full force. The Lord says, do you love me, Peter? And what Peter really says is, Lord I'm fond of you, [00:31:03] or I'm attached to you. The word that the Lord used has been called the love of prizing. The love of something or somebody because of what that person is. You love someone because of who he is. And the word that Peter used is the love of liking or fondness. The Lord says, Peter do you love me? And what Peter says, I won't go as far as the word that you are using, Lord. I'm fond of you. Peter didn't now want a boast of his love, you see. This shows a true humiliation on Peter's part. He's not, he's not saying now I love you more than all of them. He's only saying, Lord I'm attached to you. The Lord says to him, feed my lambs. Feed my lambs, Peter. The

Lord's accepting what Peter says and he gives him the commission. I'm now giving you the work of feeding my lambs, [00:32:02] Peter. One that's denied his Lord to feed his lambs, yes, the Lord's forgiving him. Then the Lord says the second time, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me? No, he doesn't say the second time, lovest thou me more than these, you see. He just says to Peter, Simon son of Jonas, do you love me? Using the same word as he used before, Peter says, yea Lord, thou knowest that I'm attached to thee. And the Lord says this time, feed my sheep, or as it really should be, shepherd my sheep. You'll notice if you have the new translation. Shepherd my sheep. Shepherd my sheep, Peter. Now the third time the Lord asks him, why does the Lord ask him three times? Because Peter denied the Lord three times. You see, the point of departure is the point of recovery. I don't know how many here have read Pilgrim's Progress, but if you haven't read [00:33:05] Pilgrim's Progress, it's worth reading. I advise the young people to read Pilgrim's Progress. It's a very old book, but it has a very up-to-date message. And you know, the pilgrim was going along and he found, he found the path rather difficult and stony, and he saw another path running parallel to it that was a nice easy path. And so he got, he got onto this narrow, into this, onto this smooth path that was running parallel to the path that he was traveling on. But he didn't notice that this smooth path that he got on gradually drew away from the other, and he ended up in doubting castle. And finally, to, in order to get back on the right path, he had to go all the way back to the point where he got wrongly to get back on the right path. And that's what we have to do. That's what Peter has to do. The Lord takes Peter right back to the point of departure, when Peter says, I love thee more the Lord, and then the Lord told him he'd [00:34:04] deny him three times, and that's what he did. So three times the Lord probes Peter. Now the third time the Lord says, Peter, are you attached to me? He uses Peter's word. Are you attached to me? Is it really even true, Peter, that you're attached to me, after all that you've done? You might say, what's the Lord stirring up, stirring up the, opening up the wound for him and making it more painful? Well, the Lord just wants to get right down to the bottom of Peter's heart and to assure him that he's forgiven him and to give him his commission. It says, Peter was grieved because the Lord said unto him the third time, art thou attached to me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things. You know my heart, Lord. You can live right down to my heart. Even though I denied you, Lord, even though I, it seems that I don't have any love for you at all, you know all things, Lord, and you know that there is some little [00:35:05] attachment in my heart for thee, Lord, he says. Thou knowest all things, he says. Thou knowest that I am attached to thee. What does the Lord say? Feed my sheep. Feed my lambs, shepherd my sheep, feed my sheep. Did Peter do that? Yes. Yes, Peter was called to be a fisherman. He didn't stop being a fisherman. He threw out the net on the day of Pentecost and he caught more than 153, he caught 3,000. But then, and a little later on he caught 5,000. But then he developed into a shepherd. I don't think Peter ever ceased to be a fisherman for Saul, but the Lord used him in his later years to be a shepherd. And God has given us in the scriptures the two epistles that Peter wrote where he sought to shepherd the lambs and sheep of the Lord's flock, of Christ's flock.

[00:36:05] And we still have those precious epistles of Peter, those two epistles of Peter. Feed my sheep, feed my lambs, shepherd my sheep, and feed my sheep. Then the Lord says to him in verse 18, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdest thyself and walkest whither thou wittest. But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wittest not. This faith is signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he said unto him, follow me. The Lord said to Peter when he made him a fisherman, follow me. And now when the Lord makes him a shepherd, he says, follow me. And that's what we have to do, beloved. Our work is to follow him. We don't have to follow men. We have to follow the Lord. And the Lord lets Peter know that he's going to die a marvellous death, that someone's going to take it, and where he wouldn't naturally [00:37:06] want to go. And history tells us,

and there's really no reason to doubt this, but possibly, probably it was true, that Peter suffered crucifixion. I think every one of the apostles died a marvellous death with the exception of John. History tells us John died of old age, and it also says that he was thrown into a corner of boiling oil and came out alive, which could have been true too, the way the Lord used miracles in those days. But anyhow, Peter knew that he was going to die a marvellous death, and it's stated that he refused to die upright because he said that was how his Lord died. And they crucified him upside down, which must have been a terrible suffering for poor Peter. But he honoured the Lord in his death by having the privilege of suffering for the Lord in that way, by the marvellous death. [00:38:03] But in the meantime, he was faithful in his service. Then Peter, verse 20, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following, which also leaned on his breast to suffer, that's John, and said, Lord which, or leaned on his breast to suffer and said, Lord which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him said to Jesus, Lord, what shall this man do? Jesus said unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. This is just Peter, wasn't it? Well, what about John, Lord? What's he going to do? The Lord says, That's nothing to do with you, Peter. If I was him to live till I come again, what's that to me? You follow me. You know, sometimes we like to say, Lord, what shall this man do? Why is this one not doing this? Why is that one not doing that? What would the Lord say to us? Brother or sister, what's that to you? You follow me. You do the work [00:39:01] that I've given you to do. And if John or Charlie or Mary doesn't do the work that I've given them to do, that's not your business. That's my business. If I want John, the Lord says, to tarry till I come, what's that to thee, Peter? You follow me. And the saying went abroad, you know, that John wasn't going to die because the Lord said that, and John has to correct that here. You see, John's gospel is written about 30 years after the other gospels, and in John we find John puts right some wrong impressions that some had on some things, and this is one of them. And this saying had got abroad, it says, this saying went 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? Now, in a certain sense, there was no doubt attached a little parabolic meaning in what the Lord said, because John does tarry till the Lord comes in [00:40:02] his ministry. John's ministry, especially in Revelation, takes us right on to the Lord's coming and beyond. So when the Lord said if I will that he tarry till I come, he didn't mean that John wasn't going to die. He meant to Peter, say to Peter, Peter, even if he does, even if I do want him to tarry till I come, that's none of your business. You follow me. But it is sort of intimating at the same time that in his ministry, John would go on till the Lord comes, and so he does. The Lord gave John the ministry in his epistles that meets the needs of the faiths right down through this period. And in the book of Revelation, he takes us right on into the eternal state when God will be all in all. Well, may the Lord bless to us these few thoughts in these seven steps in the restoration of Peter. Peter denied the Lord, but Peter was restored. [00:41:05] Peter learned the lesson. And as you read his epistle, you can see certain references. For instance, he says, kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Why does Peter say that? He knew what it was. It was only the power of God that could keep it. I believe Peter was a much more useful vessel after this because of the experience he'd been through. He'd learned the deceitfulness of his own heart. He'd learned not to trust it. And he'd learned the Lord's loving grace, loving restoring grace. And may we realize the Lord's restoring grace to us, even though so often we might fail.