

Today we are looking at "The New Man"

Do you remember, after the Last Supper, Jesus goes to the mount of transfiguration to pray and on the way there, Peter proclaims to the Lord ***"I will lay down my life for Your sake."*** Yet when Peter experiences reproach he quickly denies knowing Jesus three times - just as Jesus said he would! Before Peter denied Christ he said:

(John 13:37-38)

"Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." (Jesus said in John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.)

Jesus answered him, *"Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times."*

And whilst Peter was in the process of denying the Lord for the third time, a rooster crowd fulfilling the prophecy of our Lord. This is what the Bible tells us happened:

(Luke 22:60)

Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, *"Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."* So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Notice that Peter wept bitterly. He instantly became torn apart when He saw our Lord's face look at Him, many things must of been going on in Peter's mind that he just could not contain his mixture of emotions. Peter at that moment had just witnessed how the Lord even knew Peter better than Peter knows himself, and this is true for all of you and myself. Notice that even whilst the Lord faced trials He did not abandon Peter, He spared a moment to look at Peter. Not with an accusing look but I bet it was done with Grace and Mercy. God knew what Peter will say and Peter had dismissed it telling the Lord "no Lord I will never deny you" and now Peter must have been reflecting on this. *"The Lord knew what I would even say? He is God and I have just denied Him."* Perhaps Peter felt that what he had just done in denying our Lord was as wicked as Judas betraying Him. It was another form of betrayal and Peter wept bitterly - but what matters is what Peter learned from it, what Peter did with it. Although Peter succumbed to the fear of persecution for his association with the Lord. Later we see Peter become a changed man who speaks of glory in persecution - He let the Lord change him.

(1 Peter 4:14)

"If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified."

Remember at the mount of transfiguration, God said of Jesus *"And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him."* Peter saw Jesus in all His Glory that day, and Peter heard God make this statement, yet Peter still denied knowing Jesus. His Spirit was willing but the flesh is weak, yet after the resurrection we see a change. But our actions always have a consequence, and the consequence of Peter denying Jesus caused him to lose his place as a disciple. Jesus now refers to Peter separately from the disciples. But is still reaching out to Peter. Unfortunately we can turn our back on God, but God will never turn His back on us, but is always reaching out! God had a plan to re-instate Peter as a disciple at the sea of Galilee, which is where Peter went fishing.

(Mark 16:7)

But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you."

After, Peter was fishing in a boat and then after all night without catching any fish he witnessed a miracle, a man across the sea on land shouts over and tells him to cast his net on the other side, and Peter obeyed. Suddenly He caught so many fish that they could not draw in the net. Peter realised it was Jesus on the land, and Peter was the first one out of the boat to go to Him. There was also a time before when Peter was on a boat and a storm was raging around him, and he witnessed a miracle when he tried to walk on the water, because He saw Jesus standing on the water and wanted to draw closer to Him. Peter got out of the boat and whilst looking straight at Jesus he managed to walk on the sea, but when he took His eyes off Jesus he began to sink. If we take our eyes off the Lord we too risk sinking and the storm that represents this world around us can consume us. However Peter called out to the Lord *"Lord, save me"* and Jesus responded by reaching out His hand and catching Peter. Jesus answered and said *"O you of little Faith, why did you doubt?"* This initially sounds like criticism from

Jesus, but it is confirmation that Peter has Faith and even if it is little in size 'like a mustard seed', it is mighty in power - and Jesus had plans for Peter - to use Peter's faith. This time though instead of walking on water, Peter swims to Jesus and probably did not take His eyes of Him to even blink! once on dry land Peter shows immediate obedience to the requests of our Lord Jesus. Jesus tells Him *"Bring some of the fish which you have just caught"* and Peter went and dragged the entire net full of fish onto dry land. Peter was so happy to be with Jesus and Jesus said to them all, *"Come and eat breakfast."* - amazing, to have Jesus cooking for you? Our God provided the fish, already had a fire burning and cooking. Our God provides.

Sitting and eating with Jesus was the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples, after He was raised from the dead. It resulted in the three *"Do you love me"* statements where Peter listens to Jesus, shows obedience and is reestablished as an Apostle, by God's Grace he becomes a changed Man and God did great things through Peter.

(John 21:15-19)

So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, *"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"*
 He said to Him, *"Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."*
 He said to him, *"Feed My lambs."* (*we are His lambs*)
 He said to him again a second time, *"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?"*
 He said to Him, *"Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."*
 He said to him, *"Tend My sheep."* (*we are His sheep*)
 He said to him the third time, *"Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?"* Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, *"Do you love Me?"*
 And he said to Him, *"Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You."*
 Jesus said to him, *"Feed My sheep. Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish."* This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, ***"Follow Me."***

I believe that before Peters re-installment he must have been feeling very mixed up emotionally. He would have been feeling very low and would have repented deeply for the three denials, whilst also very elated with excitement and wonder. Jesus is alive! When Peter denied Christ leaving Christ to face His trial on His own, not only was it a denial but it resulted in sin, because his denial was a lie. Peter did know Jesus... yet said he did not know Him.

However, this sin was shortly after paid for on the cross - by the blood of Jesus. Can you imagine, even though Peter must have been thinking *"I added to Christs suffering due to that lie"* and *"If I had kept my promise and died for you then I too should have been on a cross - next to you my King."* However the Lord had a different plan for Peter, and the Lord did what He always does, He turned what was bad into Good - because Peter by being alive becomes one of the key figures in establishing His Church, Peter became a fisher of Men, Peter remains alive and his sins washed clean by the very blood of the Lord that He had just denied even knowing! God shows Grace and Mercy for Peter.

So the Lord speaks with Peter and seeks to re-instate him as an Apostle to build His Church. Peter clearly has trouble in responding to our Lord. Why? It is because of the past that he has not yet learned to let go. He does not yet understand in his heart that by Christ now being back from the dead, and the fact that Peter believes in Him resurrected - that this makes him a Christian! and this means all of Peters sins are now erased as if they did not happen... therefore Christ does not focus on the Simon with denials but the focus is on *"Peter the Rock."* You see Simon is the old man and Peter is to be the new Man, the changed Man whom will soon tell God he loves Him three times to make up for the three denials.

So Christ asks Peter *"Do you Love me"* using the word 'agapais' for unconditional sacrificial love. However Peter was doubting due to the past - he felt unable to reply with the stronger word for love that was agapais. He replied with 'phileo' meaning *"I love you with affection - as a friend"* so Peter was not really answering. Peter after his statement in John 13:37-38 said he was ready to die for the Lord yet he went on to deny Him three times. (*and Jesus once said in John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.*)

So now he was doubting himself and unable to say 'agapais' and chose to use the lesser word 'phileo' yet no doubt Peter also realised how Jesus had just died on the cross for the entire world with both 'agapais' and 'Phileo' for all of us - Jesus lived up to the meaning of the term 'agapais' and 'Phileo', something Peter was unable to previously do.

Now we notice by the third time Jesus asks Peter Jesus resorts to the lesser word of 'phileo'. This seems to upset Peter and I don't think just because it reminded Peter of his three denials but also because Jesus changed his question to match Peters own words, thus acknowledging that Peter was doubting and not really answering. Now Peter once again perhaps felt he had denied Christ because now Jesus had also lessened His question - a bit like psychology - you know how if you talk with someone you can sometimes mimic that persons own character? and so Peter lost his chance to say *"Yes Lord I really do agapais you"*

BUT notice - Jesus then tells Peter how he will die.... why would He do this? He also states that Peter shall glorify God. Here I think Jesus was comforting Peter to remove his doubts by letting Peter know, by saying to Peter (in a sense) *"Peter you will live to a good old age, also you said previously you will die for Me, and do not worry, do not doubt Peter - because you do agapais Me. You will surely die for Me at an old age and never deny Me, you will glorify Me. So do not live your life fearing and in doubt - I know all things just as you have said! I know you agapais Me."*

Peter had just said in John 21:17: *"And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things"* as Peter had witnessed fully by Jesus prophesying the three denials. Peter trusted the Lord.

By telling Peter all this, Peter could live his life serving the Lord knowing that he will live to a good old age without wondering if he will deny the Lord again. Legend has it that Peter later died on a cross upside down - crucified. So if this is true then it means Peter did in the end take his place on the cross just as he would have done many years before if he had kept his promise.

Jesus got to the heart of the matter. It is about the condition of our hearts - examine our hearts and mind. Simon was the old man - and Peter is the new man. However Peter would have to keep on putting this new man on daily by resting in the Lord and following Him - just as we all need to do.

Years ago I had a recurring vision - near the beginning of my conversion. This vision is so real and so freaky I had not written it down till now. I was I guess in a state of semi awareness, I am kind of awake and see myself in the body, and it is perfect like in a mirror - it really is me to the finest detail looking at myself but both of us are like different people spiritually. I mean it is me! But I am not in control of this other me. Not only this but the me I am looking at is utterly totally vile as a person, he is evil - nothing good is in this other me and I disliked him because I view this other me as an abomination. He is evil, dubious, tricky. I would not trust this version of me. However I felt an attachment to this version of me, because it is me it will not leave me. However it would not approach me either and just wanted to be menacing; God was protecting me from myself. But I will tell you the truth... What I sense in the heart of this ME is what I truly once was and potentially could still be lingering in my heart - if I let it get its way.

This dream had no meaning till today when I realised what it is about. I am a new person. But the old me is still there because it is in my flesh, the body is evil and sinful and demands to receive pleasure and indulgence and would like to cause doubt. However as a Christian being born again, putting on our new person daily means our bodies are to become filled with the Spirit and to be a vessel for the Spirit of God. The old ME which is my body that would enslave me is warring with the new ME just as Paul says, and this is true for all of us, for you and for me. But Paul learned that the old him was the past and has been paid for by the blood of Jesus - this is also true for you and for me.

By embracing Christ and putting on the new ME, my old ME has been cast outside of my body. That is why I saw ME in the body but outside of ME. Because I must keep it on the outside of my body. My flesh is evil and if I let it consume my inner being too - it would..... But by embracing Christ, being sanctified by our God and putting on the new ME daily the old ME is confined to my outer flesh until one day I get my new body and you also, then the warring stops. Let's remember to keep putting on the new ME and to serve our Lord daily.

Now I am going to get a bit weird. I believe Satan does not like Marmite - I will tell you why?

I have never liked Marmite. It would make me shudder! Equally I never liked too much Cinnamon, it made me shudder. Yet both of these are extremely good for you though.... I continued to avoid them for years till a few years ago. I have now discovered I love Marmite. I also hated Cinnamon and actually now I appreciate the flavour. Hmm how can that be? After 40 years I began to like what I hated. Hmm what has changed? Ahhh I am a new person in our Lord.

Satan hates God, and is at war with God. Hating someone is to be at war with someone and you oppose everything that the person stands for. God is Good and that means Satan hates anything Good. My body was a slave for Satan, he had his claws in my flesh and had my body searching after pleasures that were not good for me, but now he has lost his influence on me. I stand before God washed in His blood and am viewed as righteous and Good because He sees me as He sees His own Son Jesus. He sees me as a new Man resting in the Lord daily.