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FEED MY SHEEP

Peter told Jesus that he would never deny him, but those words would become bitter in his mouth. Not only did he deny him once, he denied him three times, before Jesus was crucified. The sorrow that he felt must have been overwhelming. It was not a surprise to the Lord when Peter did this. He even told him in Luke 22: 31-32: ***“and 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.”*** Then Peter responds in verse 33 ***“and he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.”*** How quickly he came back with an answer. Then Jesus said in v. 34 ***“And he said, I tell thee Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.”***

Sure enough, just like Jesus said, Peter denied Him three times, and the third time the cock crew. Luke 22:61 says ***“and Peter went out, and wept bitterly.”*** Like Peter, we may say we will never deny Jesus, but we often do deny him. We deny him the right to live in our homes when he wants to reside there. We deny him the right to tell us by Holy Spirit that we need to repent of our sin. We deny Him the right to be Lord of our lives. We deny Him access to the deep parts of our soul. Yes, we made Him, Savior, but have we made him Lord?

With the bitter weeping, I can only imagine what Peter went through. I wonder if he considered doing what Judas did when he sold Jesus out for 30 pieces of silver and then hung himself. I wonder if he wanted to run and hide from the disciples that heard Jesus tell him that. I wonder if they spoke to him, and said “I told you so.” We will never know except we know he wept bitterly.

Is there any restitution for our betrayal? Oh, yes, my friends there is. After the resurrection, the eleven were gathered together and Jesus stood in the midst of them and said ***“Peace be unto you”*** (v. 36) Then in John 21: 15-17 after the resurrection, Jesus dined with the disciples and said 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 said unto him, Feed my lambs. 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. 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. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whether thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.”***

Three times Peter denied the Lord, three times Jesus asked him if he loved him. Grace for each failure. That same grace is available to you and I when we have sorrow over our sin. Did Peter feed the sheep? Oh, yes, he did. He became a pillar in the Church. He preached at Pentecost, and his message brought salvation to over 3,000. He was a changed man because he knew the grace and love and restoration of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is always willing to bring us back to him. If He prayed for Peter he prays for us. In Hebrews 7:25 it says: ***“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.”*** Yes, He prays for us, and knows our heart. So be rest assured, though you may have failed, He is praying for your restoration. Trust Him for it! Feed his sheep.