

The Two Conversions of Peter Part 1

I want to talk about Peter being converted and see how that relates to us.

Matthew 4:18 “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.”

For years after this event Peter was a follower of Jesus and when I say that I mean one who was among the first to be converted. He was among the most committed, if not the most committed. He had left his former life as a fisherman so this was no whim sort of thing. He had had a powerful conversion, not just where he believed in Jesus that passed by and believed that there was a Jesus, but he got his life all wrapped up with Jesus. He changed his direction and it began to be focused. And that focus was Jesus. We see all through-out his walk with the Lord a love, a commitment, a desire after the Lord. But if you'll turn with me to Luke twenty-two, Jesus begins to allude to another conversion and it's for Peter. And this conversion was another conversion that was needed. It was needed, even though you could say he was the top follower of Christ. He was the leader of the twelve. Jesus looked at him and saw that he needed another conversion other than the one that Peter already had when he first got introduced to Jesus.

What is Our Response to More of Jesus?

Luke 22:31-33 “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. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.”

You see Peter thought that he was fully converted. He believed that. “I love Jesus, I'm committed, I'm for the Lord. I'm going after the Lord.” So when even Jesus Himself mentions that Peter is in need of something, “Not Peter for God sake, not Peter! Check out Thaddeus, how's he doing? But not Peter!” But Jesus is the one who brings this up to Peter and says, “There is a conversion that you need. And once you have come to this conversion you will be able to strengthen your brethren.” And Peter says, “Oh no, I'm already ready to die.” This is his words, his response to the possibility to more of Jesus. The direct response of the Lord Himself into his own life, “Oh no, I am maxi-converted! I am to the hilt, I am industrial strength converted!” That's what he believed about himself. That's what he believed about himself and not even Jesus could change his mind. Now I would say that Jesus is a good teacher, would you agree with that? And yet Jesus Himself, could not change his mind in this area of who he thought he was, how committed he thought he was, his view of himself in relationship to Jesus.

Luke 22:34 “And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.” This day! This day, what about this day?

There's Got to Be More

And so there is I believe, now this is my speculations here, I believe there is in Peter even though he is a big fish in a little pond, meaning he has got a lot of pull, a lot of weight with the twelve, even though they are impressed with Peter, even though Peter is the one jumping out and walking on the water and Peter is the one going, "I won't deny you, I'll live for you!" He's got the gusto of the hound dog at work in him. But he is just a big fish in a little pond. Which if you throw that big fish into a big pond, then you are a little fish in a big pond. And that doesn't feel so good. It's better to be, at least for the flesh, the flesh that's covered with scales, it's better to be a big fish in a little pond because then all the other little fish are really, really, super impressed with you. But I believe even within Peter, even with all the things that he was doing, and I believe this based on the fact that this man followed the Lord all the days of his life, I believe that there was something yet in Peter, even though he had done all these things, even though he was looked upon in these ways, I believe there was a desperate, desperate cry in him. And this walking with Jesus, only proved to him over and over that, "there really is a lack in me", yet he had not yet been converted to it. I believe there was a sense in all of these twelve, I believe there was a sense of destiny, a sense of calling, a sense of the eternal plan of God and yet if you checked on the inside of each one of them you felt like everyone of them felt like they were falling short of that. There's got to be more. For me there's got to be more. There's got to be a life...well the thought came to me, there's got to be a time when I can give voice to my life. I'm not just in a dungeon buried down beneath the earth, loving Jesus, wanting Jesus, wanting to be a tool for Jesus and a vessel for Jesus. But I am a stow-away, I am locked away, I am desperately somewhere on the inside of me, screaming out to break out and yet the circumstances and the situations, whether it be outward or inward. Because how about we say it like Paul said, "Whether it be outward or inward, I know not", I just know there is this prime-evil scream in me from time to time, that I am dis-satisfied. Now remember we're still also talking about Peter who was a big fish in a little pond and yet there is something in him screaming, going, "More for the Lord! More for the Lord! And yet what is wrong with me? Why can't I do this thing?" At one point and what will it take to give voice to the life I believe I have within me. Like singing, like an Opera, like the change that happened in Peter in the book of Acts compared to what he was before. Where with great boldness he stood up in front of nations, in his first sermon and converted thousands and we'll look at the scriptures a little closer in light of this reality of being converted.

Peter Had Not Yet Strengthened the Brethren

You know you can be a hero on the inside and if you never have anybody to save, you know what I mean? You can be, "Yeah! I've got the stuff!" Just nothing ever happens! "If the house would catch on fire..." I'm just using these things as an example, but being a hero on the inside is not enough and I think that Jesus looked at Peter and knew that Peter wanted to strengthen his brethren, to strengthen the brethren. Now that's a whole different kind of conversion. Because apparently with Peter, apparently with all the highly committed acts and the high talk and all of the displays that Peter had given, it hadn't strengthened the brethren yet. You would think great displays of passion would move the people. You would think pouring yourself out as much as you know how, I mean look at the other disciples watching Peter's reaction to Jesus' words, "I would die for you!" And thinking that is going to move the brothers, they're going to catch the flame that Peter has. "They're going to catch my flame and this baby is going to take off. Jesus is a little discouraged right now." Of course on that very day Jesus would be put to death. And of course on that same day Peter would deny Him three times. And say that he doesn't know Him. And so he hadn't really strengthened the brethren, I mean moving people temporarily is not strengthening them. Everyone of us has experienced that where you go to church and you get moved a little bit only to go back out and find your own weakness arising within

you again and saying, “What is wrong with me?” Or if you're not that far along, “What is wrong with this place?” I have my own theories! But that's not really my purpose at all, because I really feel that I heard something from the Lord that must be communicated. Because for Peter to be able to strengthen his brethren, apparently it's going to take, I mean Peter is going to have to literally find the deepest depths of personal weakness and failure within him before he is ever going to be able to strengthen anybody. That is not just a sermon, I mean that Peter is going to have to find within him the deepest depths of his own personal weakness and failure before he is ever going to be able to strengthen the brethren. There's a conversion he's not yet had. Oh, he's been converted to Christianity. But there is a conversion that has not yet taken place in him.

The Three Denials

Matthew 26:69-75 “Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.”

“But you'll never give voice to the life until you've had the true conversion.”

He wept bitterly before the Lord, in this sense, before the Lord. Many of us have seen our failures and wept bitterly before the Lord. We have seen our own personal failures. We have seen how we have come short of the Lord. We have seen potentialities that are not admirable. And we have wept. But Peter is not yet converted. It had not sunk in yet, it had not got there. In other words, a weeping type heart, a broken heart type of situation, pertaining to commitment and willingness is not enough. Because Peter is still Peter, even if he feels bad about himself. He can pull himself up, as we say in Texas, by his bootstraps. He can pull himself back up and get up and say, “Yes I failed and I'm broken.” But I'm telling you it's not enough, not for the conversion that is needed. Yes it's wonderful along the path. But you'll never give voice to the life until you've had the true conversion. Not just brokenness. There is a difference between the conversion and brokenness. Brokenness can be nothing more than feeling bad about what you did. Conversion is completely turning and going in another direction. And I know a whole lot of spirit-filled, bible-believing, devil-stomping, blood-washed believers that could use a good healthy dose of conversion. It's my opinion. With Peter it's like at this point we are just praying for him. Praying incredibly hard for him, because it must not just be a higher commitment, but a conversion. It must not. It must not end with just Peter kicking his commitment level up another notch. What's it going to take? Turn with me to Mark, this is prior to Peter denying the Lord, it's not that far in front.

Mark 14:26 “And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives. And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet will not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.”

Peter On Trial

Peter was a highly committed man. He is vowing to make a glorious stand for the truth, even unto death. Now I want you to hear those words carefully. He is doing what every Christian does. They commit to make a glorious stand for the Lord. "If it comes down to duh-duh-duh, I will make this stand for the truth, I will do it even unto death!" But when the trial comes, and as I meditated on this, I thought of the word "trial" because Jesus was on trial, but Peter was too. The "trial" to determine guilt or innocence, if you will. The trial had come. But when the trial comes, surprise of all surprise! It is not a glorious battle for the truth, it ends up not being this really glorious battle. It's not what you prepared yourself for. It's not at all what you prepared yourself for. In fact, it throws you completely because you did not think it was going to look like what it looks like now. And when you are prepared one way, it's like, "The enemy is coming and he looks like this and he acts like this, and all you have to do is this." And so you are preparing and you are looking for him to come and you have all this kind of stuff and he comes up behind you and he completely looks different and acts different and everything. He's more scary and just different from the other, so it is more scary and it catches you off guard. And all the plans and preparation fall around you and you say, "What am I going to do? I wanted so much to have the glorious battle!"

We Hid Our Faces

A perfect scripture for this Isaiah fifty-three, some of the early scriptures here. Here we begin to view Jesus on the cross, verse two, *"For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him."* There is no beauty that we should desire Him! *"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."* On the cross Peter's leader looks like a failure. He looks like a criminal to everyone around! This is not a glorious battle for the truth now. This has been reduced down to your leader is a failure and a loser, and if you're going to be identified with Him, you're going to be identified with a loser, not a winner. Are you up for that? I can just see Peter thinking, you could hear Peter that same day saying, "I will die for you!" Well yes, if it was, "There's the Son of God, there's the glorious Messiah!" and then you'll say, "And I'll die for Him! And I'll stand in front of Him and take the arrows!" But it's all worked and manipulated, and brought to this point where everybody looks and says, "This is your leader? He's a loser, and you're a loser if that's who you're following." All of this preparation for this great destiny is just like, "Golly! I didn't know it was going to be like this!" And to face that like Peter did, it may actually cause you to hide away, hide yourself away and protect yourself. To withdraw from that. Do you understand what I just said? I'm telling you that instead of it making you want to throw yourself in front of the bullet, all of the sudden, things in you, or shall we call it "you", "Man, I just want to hide away". And that's what all of them did, but John. They all went and hid themselves. IT makes you want to hide yourself, and then people come up and say, "Oh, are you with Him?" "No, I'm with the guy who came into Jerusalem on the donkey with all of the branches. I'm with that guy." Does that make sense? We'll be identified with that guy. That's the one everybody loved, that's the one everybody's been waiting for, "that's who I'm with." "But are you with this guy?" "No!" Everything within you begins to be repelled from Him because of why? What is the reason? You want to protect yourself. You're thinking about yourself and how this is going to make you look, and this is not how you wanted to look! This is not what you've mulled over, and over in your mind how you would look when you finally stood up for Jesus! And it's disconcerting at best! Notice I said, "at best".

Legions of Angels

There was something in Matthew I wanted us to look at. I keep jumping back and forth to give you a picture of the man Peter before conversion and then we'll look at him after conversion. But we're looking at the man in the face of seeing that he's not who he thought he was. And here they are in the Garden and they've come to arrest Jesus, verse fifty-two, *"Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place:"* Because here is Peter again, he's throwing himself in the fray, he's throwing himself before the Lord. The Lord is, as far as he knows, this is the Son of God. "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Everything within him is saying, "I bear witness to this man's words! And right now it's looking bad, but God will send an angel, or God will rise up or God will open up the earth and swallow up these people. They are wrong! They don't even know who He is!" And Peter is ready and he pulls out the sword and he cuts off an ear, and he's ready to show everybody, "I want you to know who this man is!" and *"said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."* Even his commitment level is being questioned by Jesus because he doesn't know anything about the Lamb, he doesn't know anything about life out of death, he only knows what he knows and that is, "I'm in this for what it's going to bring me." Remember the boys talking? "Let me sit on your right hand, let me sit on your left. For what this is going to do for us, for me! For my reputation! For my power, my this and that." Verse fifty-three, *"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father; and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?"* "Peter if I needed that kind of commitment, I've got it in the angels. Twelve legions, not Peter swinging a piece of steel. You look at the Old Testament when Sennacherib and his armies came out against Jerusalem and God sent one angel through the camp, and I forget the exact number, but it was like one hundred, two hundred or five thousand soldiers dead by one angel. I mean if this is a power struggle, if this is about winning, we could win like that! Jesus knows that! Jesus goes, "This is not about winning on this level, I'm not going to send the angels and I don't need you, on this level. I've already talked to you about how I need you. I need you converted. Right now you are opposite of me, right now you don't really, you think you do and you're ready to stand up for the Jesus you think you know, but you don't really, really know me. You don't. You haven't been converted. You've been converted to follow the man Jesus, but you don't know the nature, you don't know the way, you haven't been converted to it." Verse fifty-four, "But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" You see Jesus is saying that the fulfillment of the scriptures is not a glorious battle and a glorious victory. *"In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled."* All the disciples forsook Him and fled. See He's not calling angels, He's saying, "you're here to fulfill the scriptures." and these guys are going, "That's not why I'm here!" They thought that it was the fulfilling of the scriptures. "that's not why I'm here. I'm here to fulfill the Kingdom scriptures!" You remember the four faces. No, there is a whole other thing, and Jesus boldly says what it is, and He says, "Peter, put away your sword." And Peter's putting it away saying, "This was it! This was my opportunity of destiny!" And Jesus was saying, "No that's not the destiny that I have for you." And he puts it away and he's confused and they all take off. What does he say one more sentence after that, and then it goes bad quick.

Fear of Shame and Self-Survival

So here is all this stuff, like when these people are coming up to Peter and it's just moments after this, people are coming up and asking, "Are you one of them? Are you one of His followers?" Peter is starting the process. Because all of these circumstances and all of these actions, all of these reactions in him involving fear of shame, and actions of self-survival, all of those kind of things reveal

to us our true character. Fear of shame. Fear of being shamed for Jesus sake. "I don't want to look bad. I thought following Jesus would make me look good!" It's says right after the third time Peter is saying, "I don't know the man" and it's getting worse because the first one that we read says, "I don't know the man." The second man he said with an oath, "I don't know him" and the third one he cursed! It's getting worse and when he does that then the cock crows, then he goes out and weeps bitterly because he is looking at himself and saying, "Self-survival and fear of shame and not wanting to be identified with this mess and this rejection and all of this stuff is rising in me, the committed. And I can't believe it! I never believed these things about myself." Because before the cross he truly believed, "I will die for Jesus." But see the cross is a shameful death, it is a criminal's death. Dying for Jesus is a not a criminal's death, it is a brave-heart! "Even if we go into battle and die we will die for the right cause!" How about they just grab you up by the scruff of your neck and crucify you like a dog? And God doesn't back you up. I mean darkness falls on the earth and spooky people, superstitious people back two-thousand years ago would say, "Well, God has left Him." Well, He did, but He didn't leave Him because of Him, He left Him because He was joined to you and I. We hid our faces from Him, because we didn't know that was us and our shame, and our ugliness. It's so hard to discover that we are not the noble person that we thought we were. That is just so difficult. It's so difficult to face the fears we have concerning our reputation and fears as to how we appear to other people. Those are the areas of conversion, not salvation conversion, one who gives voice to his life, one who eventually sings the song of the gospel and it goes around the world. But to do that, there can't be a bunch of flesh and self, God can't give that to someone like that. Because they will really abuse it. You will, I will really abuse that, so there is a deep, deep, death pertaining to how we appear to others so that we are just ready to be with Jesus and it doesn't matter. Because the Father knows. I know that we all say that. "Well the Father knows, so I am OK." But wait until the circumstances happen and only the Father knows, are you really OK? I mean, only the Father knows and everybody else believes absolutely the worst and for you to stand for Jesus means that you are going to have to go with Him outside the camp. That's where all the rejected stuff goes.

Desperate Before Destiny

tell you what though Peter had failed miserably, he had certain eternal realities put in him by the Lord prior to this whole event. He did, because he had heard, there is one thing to say, "I will die for you" and it's another thing to say, "Where shall we go, thou has the words of eternal life." I'm telling you that is a whole different thing. It's not the same level of commitment, it is eternal realities, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Eternal realities are in there! Maybe they hadn't taken hold, maybe they are not in full control, but the seeds are in Peter. And Peter knew that it was. Thank God! Even though everything Peter was manifesting at this moment in terms of rejection, pride, fear of shame, and fear of being rejected by others and looking bad, and how he's going to appear before other people, and his reputation and all this kind of stuff. Still deep within him were real seeds, golden seeds, that had not yet sprung fully up and that is part of that eternal destiny that he felt. He just didn't understand why he wasn't breaking out with it, but it was there. But Peter didn't know, he thought it was going to be a glorious circumstance that would bring those seeds forth. He didn't know that it would be the hardest point in his whole life. The most desperate end that he would come to before, how about desperate before destiny. Well, that's hard for some people to understand. Even though Peter had failed, Peter knew where to run after failure. The gospel of John shows us this.

John 20:1-6 "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulcher, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulcher. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the LORD out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and

that other disciple, and came to the sepulcher. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulcher. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulcher, and seeth the linen clothes lie,”

Knowing What to Do After You Fail

Peter knew what to do after he failed! He knew what to do. That is the key, not everybody does. He knew. He ran to the place where resurrection was reported. When you reach this place, death and resurrection becomes your hope. IT becomes your hope for the future and not just deliverance. Everything in your mind has been trained by Christianity to think in terms of deliverance, the man is desperate about himself. He is desperate about himself. He is discouraged about himself. Has anybody ever been discouraged about yourself? It's one thing to be discouraged about your circumstances or people, it's another thing to look within and say, “We had hope that this one had been the one! But we're not seeing it in us, we're seeing the exact opposite.” And so deliverance is out of the question now. “I don't need deliverance, I'm not going to look for deliverance. I need the Lord, I need the cross, I need the resurrection and the life!” And so when he just even hears, “Jesus resurrected, tomb...” He's running! “I have to get there! I have to get there!” Praise God. I know I have you jumping all over, but we are just covering these scriptures in the Gospels, Matthew chapter twenty-seven, because I want you to see something else going on here. During the same exact events concerning Jesus and Him dying and being taken in the garden, during those same exact events, during the death, during the resurrection, Judas also experienced failure.

Matthew 27:1-5 “When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.”

He went out and hanged himself. Instead of running to Jesus to find hope in His resurrection, Judas went out and took his own life. Anybody see anything with that? During the same events, they are exactly the same, and I bet you anything Peter felt just like he had betrayed Jesus. If you used the word betrayed, he'd probably have said, “Yes”. He might have even been thinking when Jesus said at the last supper, “One of you will betray me”, he might have even been thinking, “I was the one.” He doesn't know, we don't know, we are a bunch of ignorant savages, we're just looking at, “Well it must be me, I'm the one, I really messed up!” But why is there a difference between these two men's actions? Why is there? They are both disciples, they both walked with Jesus, they both heard His words, they both saw His miracles. They both spent the same amount of time with Him, they both went through the exact same circumstances, but there is a difference in how they are responding. Peter before the cross, before the resurrection, his faith seemed to be in himself. Don't you agree? But as we'll see his faith now begins to be in Jesus. His faith was at first in himself, “I will die for you. I will do all this.” But after this, after he was converted, he's going to be able to strengthen the brethren! You can begin to comprehend this conversion in his own letter, in his own hand.

Being Born of Incorruptible Seed

1 Peter 1:23 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

Listen to where he puts the emphasis, it's on the incorruptible seed! He knows, "I am not that seed. I am corruptible." And so he doesn't just say, "Being born again of the seed of God." He could say that, "Being born again of the Holy Seed, Jesus" or "the Son of God Himself." He uses the word "incorruptible" because he is convinced of his own corruptibility. And before we will ever put a whole hearted faith in Christ, before we'll ever do that, we are going to have to become deeply, deeply aware of our own flesh, and that our own flesh will fail. You won't be converted and you won't strengthen your brethren until you do. You're going to have to go deep, deep, down. Because we say all the right things, we've been trained to say the right things. "Oh yes, you have to give up self. You have to die, you have to reckon yourself dead." It's just a bunch of words until you really show up and you say, "Oh my God! I need the cross!" "Wait a minute, aren't you the one that's been preaching it for ten years, twenty years?" "Yes, but I really need it!" "Well, amen to that." People always wonder why some people fail after having learned the message of Christ for so many years. I'll tell you exactly why, because they have not been converted yet. Converted to this, they have been converted to salvation, but they have not been converted in that they are ready to make a turn from themselves. And Peter really spells this out after verse twenty-three where he describes the seed, he says, *"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:"* Do you see his point? He's saying "You must be born again of incorruptible seed. Not born again of the savior. The seed of God that is incorruptible must be your life, your birth, your new existence, for all flesh is like grass and the glory of man like a flower that appears for just a little while, and then fades away, that's you." Now who is saying that? Peter is saying that, Peter knows maybe better than anybody else, Peter knows!

Notice when we read the scriptures in Luke, when Jesus prayed for Peter He didn't say, "I have prayed for you that your flesh fail not." Why? Because our flesh will fail. It must fail, it will fail. Don't deceive yourself. Jesus isn't going to pray for your flesh to fail. And if you've been failing in the flesh, stop praying for stupidities! Just incredible stupidities. Stop praying that your flesh won't fail because it's going to. And if God's ever going to get what He wants to get out of you, it must fail. It must, there's just no other way around it. We put too much trust in our flesh, too much confidence in our flesh. Way, way too much. If we have had only hope in ourselves, I mean only, only hope in ourselves. Then when we fail, then when we're faced with hopelessness, we're going to take Judas' way out. It's the truth. If we have had only, the only hope that we really had was in us for Jesus, and we're separate from Jesus, or He's far away, or He's next to you, but you're separate from Him, then when you fall into hopelessness and you're faced with your own hopelessness, you'll only have one choice, and that's Judas' way out. You will just want to get rid of yourself.

Christ In You the Hope of Glory

Since we're in the New Testament, look in Colossians chapter one, verse twenty-seven, listen to the words of a man, as if he were Peter, hearing these words, *"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach..."* Do you hear what Paul's said when he said that? He said, "The only hope that you Gentiles have, and anybody else, Jews or anybody," and Paul's the one who found this out, because he's the one who spelled it out in Galatians, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet it's not I, but Christ lives in me...my hope is Christ in me!" And notice that he says, "And you Gentiles." You know what the Jews thought about the Gentiles, they thought that they were dogs, they thought that

they were animals. They looked at themselves as the keepers of righteousness and goodness, and faithfulness and everything else until they began to see themselves like Peter does, and like Paul does. And the words begin to almost vomit out of their mouths, "Oh wretched man that I am, that *I* am." So Paul just like Peter begins to preach Christ in you, "Your hope, your hope." Peter, the messenger with the gospel to the Jews, Paul with the message to the Gentiles, "Your hope Gentiles. You are hopeless without this, which is Christ, but not just Christ, not just Christ the savior," he says, "Christ in you". And then listen to this, "Whom we preach." That's the message that they preached in the New Testament, they preached Christ being formed in you, was their hope. That's what they preached. I don't care how many people tell you, "this sounds foreign". It's not foreign to the scriptures if you just read it. But our eyes are not opened to it. We're holding, because we've been fed the wrong gospel.

Fed the Wrong Gospel

We've been fed a gospel that is trying to pump us up. And if you go to a service, almost any service, but certainly these big church services, they are pumping you up by worship and praise and everything else, and then they're telling you, "You need to get committed." Go to any youth meeting, or anything and they are saying, "Get committed, you need to go for God!" It's all about you. They just mention you do it for Jesus. If that was the answer then we would have taken the world with all the youth over the last fifteen years. We've had enough youth having great, exciting, pumped up sermons to them, that we should have already taken the world. Where are they? I don't know. I think they've mixed back into the world. Where are they? They have just sort of blended back in. Another generation comes along, gets pumped up, goes to a great concert, "Where the spirit of the Lord is..." Yes, that's right, and then hope that once you get past youth you'll be something for God and many of them don't even continue. Thank God for all the Christian musicians, because we wouldn't even have any decent secular music if it weren't for all the backslidden people that were raised in Church, that learned their music in Church. Aretha Franklin is one of them. Can that woman sing? Who gave her that voice? Just a little bit of respect, you want some respect? I shouldn't have gone there. But it's the truth. I'll just say one more thing that makes people think that I'm off and weird, but I'm telling you the truth, all those people were raised up for the Lord and meant to serve the Lord and nobody ever got Christ formed in them, and they went out and couldn't stand on their own and so they said, "Well, I might as well be rich with this if I can't serve the Lord with it."

But like with Peter, if even the slightest seed of hope in Christ has been planted into us, even the slightest, then at the sound of resurrection we will run towards it. Something in you says, "I need that! I want that!" If it's not in you, and I don't mean physically you are going to commit suicide, but you're going to hang yourself, you'll show yourself for what you are, you'll hang yourself. You'll hang your own self. You don't have to worry about the devil sneaking up on you. Have you ever heard that saying, "Give them enough rope and they'll hang themselves?" The reason why more people, and again I'm not talking about physical suicide, the reason why more people are not hanging themselves, is because we won't give them any rope. We keep pulling it back and try to straighten them out, and straighten out their flesh. That's our problem now, we've got hope in their flesh. We're just a mess. And according to all the equipment now, I have one minute to finish this. According to what I have in my Spirit I need to go tonight. Because I think that there is something left to be said about conversion, about the true conversion, about being converted. Not to Christianity, to Christ, that's our hope. Christ in you the hope of glory.

