

- F) Just as Peter denies Christ for the third time, a rooster crows (John 18:27) at which point Christ (from across the courtyard) makes eye contact with Peter. Peter leaves the courtyard and weeps bitterly (Luke 22:60-62).

4) A Very Public Restoration²

- A) Peter is out fishing with some of the other disciples after the death & resurrection of Jesus Christ (John 21:1-5). Up to this point in all the gospels, there is no recorded interaction between Peter and Jesus.
- B) Once John realizes the miracle of the catch of fish (21:6-7), he tells Peter that it is Jesus who has called to them from the shore. Peter jumps from the boat and swims to shore to get to Christ quickly and join him around a charcoal fire (21:7-9).
- C) After breakfast, Jesus asks Peter if he loves Christ more than the other disciples, to which Peter responds "Yes, Lord; You know that I love you..." (John 21:15). This is repeated three times, to the point of grieving Peter (21:16-17).
- D) Each time, as though restoring Peter for each of his three denials, Jesus asks Peter to care for His sheep (21:15-17). Knowing his failure, Peter is forgiven (breaking bread) and restored (feed my sheep) by Christ for genuine ministry!

Ω It should be noted that the accounts of Peter's denials, which are recorded in all four gospel accounts (a rarity), could only have been known if Peter himself revealed the account to his fellow disciples and friends. The unknown disciple of John 18:15 gives a great deal of detail about Christ's trials, locating him in the inner courtyard. Only Peter was in the outer courtyard, and only Peter could have given the details of his own denials (e.g. the charcoal fire, the questions from a relative of Malchus, the swearing and cursing, the eye-contact w/ Christ, etc.). There is some powerful humility in Peter's admissions, and equally powerful grace in Christ's public restoration.

Rejection & Restoration

Long Beach Alliance Church • October 9th, 2005 • Pastor Chris Lankford

PETER *SAID TO HIM... "I WILL LAY DOWN MY LIFE FOR YOU." JESUS *ANSWERED, "WILL YOU LAY DOWN YOUR LIFE FOR ME? TRULY, TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, A ROOSTER WILL NOT CROW UNTIL YOU DENY ME THREE TIMES.

~JOHN 13:37-38 (NASB)

1) The Disciple Who Most Reminds Us Of Us...

- A) Simon the son of John (or Barjonah (son of Jonah/John), Matthew 16:17) was chosen by Jesus Christ as a disciple early in Christ's public ministry (John 1:40-42).
- B) It was at this time of choosing that Simon son of John was renamed* 'Cephas' (Aramaic, a language similar to Hebrew), which is translated into Greek as 'Peter' (which means 'rock').

* Jesus' renaming of Simon to Cephas/Peter was to both show the authority of Jesus to redefine the lives of others, but also the dramatic transition which Simon Peter would experience. In the gospel of John, Peter is (without deprecation) characterized as being obtuse, thick-headed, stubborn and persistently unaware of Jesus Christ's true purposes. The only "rock" we could associate with Peter would be that his head

- C) Peter shows remarkable insight at times (John 6:68), and also shows astounding insensitivity (13:6-9). At each moment, Peter exemplifies what is best and worst in all of us.

2) A Man With The Best Of Intentions

- A) In what should have been "one of his greatest moments," Peter declares to Jesus that he would die for Jesus (John 13:37).
- B) Jesus though, is completely unmoved by Peter's sincere zeal, predicting that Peter will deny Christ three times before the next morning comes (13:38).
- C) After Christ has been betrayed by Judas (John 18:1-9), Peter decides it is time to fight, and strikes out with a sword/dagger and hits Malchus, the slave of the high priest, cutting off his right ear (18:10).
- D) Jesus though, tells Peter to put his sword away (probably saving his life) and heals Malchus (Luke 22:49-51).

3) A Very Private Failure

- A) Peter follows as Jesus is hauled away for a series of

was as dense as a rock. This is in dramatic contrast to the Peter of the early church (detailed in the book of Acts). There, Peter fulfills his "re-naming," becoming the leadership "rock" on which Christ builds His church (Matthew 16:18). Remarkably, it is the 'softening' of the "rock" through John's gospel which solidifies Christ in the man and prepares Peter for the Spirit-filled life of being the "rock" he was meant to be.

counterfeit trials[‡] (most of which were illegal) lasting through the evening. Another disciple[†] helps Peter gain access to the high priest's courtyard (John 18:15-16).

- B) While walking through the front gate, Peter is recognized and confronted by a slave-girl. Peter denies he is a disciple of Jesus, but keeps his distance near a charcoal fire at a safe distance from Jesus Christ's public trial (John 18:17).
- C) Peter is confronted again about being a disciple of Christ, which Peter denies for a second time (John 18:25).
- D) Peter is confronted again about being a disciple of Christ, but this time, it is an eye-witness and relative of Peter's previous deft swordsmanship in the Garden of Gethsemane (18:26).
- E) For a third time, Peter denies any association with Christ (18:27). His denials are so intense, Peter curses and swears his disavowal of Christ (Mark 14:70-71).

‡ The account of Christ's arrest, trials, suffering and crucifixion are referred to as the "Passion" account of Jesus Christ. We are skipping a large amount of this material because we discussed it in great detail during the Easter season of earlier this year (March, 2005). We will also be discussing it again during the Easter season of next year (April, 2006). If you would like to "re-connect" with our Easter sermon series, you can do so by visiting our web site (www.lbac.org) and selecting the 'Sermons' page. Look for March 20th & March 25th for Passion Week details.

† The identity of the 'other' disciple is almost certainly John, the author of this gospel (cf. similar references in John 20:2, 3, 4, 8). This would explain the great detail which is represented in these accounts. However, it should not be assumed with certainty that this is John. The fact is, we do not know the identity of this disciple for sure, which was his intention. For the author, this story is about Jesus and redemption. Even Peter, the disciple who does get some focus, is a story about Jesus and redemption. Bottom line -- it's all about Jesus, not His followers...