

Luke 22:31

by Chuck Smith

Jesus prayed for Peter that his faith would not fail him, and He is praying for us too, that our faith will not fail.

Scripture: Luke 22:31

Topics: "Faith", "Intercession"

Description

Chuck Smith emphasizes the unfailing faith of Peter, highlighting how Satan sought to undermine him due to his potential leadership in the early church. Jesus reassured Peter by stating, 'I have prayed for you,' focusing on the importance of faith amidst trials and temptations. Smith explains that while Peter would face significant challenges and failures, Jesus' intercession would ultimately strengthen him and prepare him to support others. The sermon illustrates that our struggles can lead to greater empathy and understanding, allowing us to comfort others in their tribulations. Ultimately, despite our failures, Jesus' prayers ensure that our faith will prevail.

Transcript

Unfailing Faith

I. Satan's desire for Peter.

A. I believe that it had become apparent that Peter was being groomed by the Lord for a place of leadership in the early church.

1. Peter was chosen for special events.

a. He was allowed with James and John to witness the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus.

b. He again was with James and John on the Mount of transfiguration.

2. Peter was one of the first to recognize that He was

the Messiah.

3. Peter was adventurous, willing to step out of the boat to walk to Jesus on the water.

B. I believe that this made Peter a special mark for Satan.

1. It seems that Satan is always seeking to destroy the leadership of the church.

2. He knows that by destroying one of great influence, he can destroy many.

C. Satan desired that he might sift Peter like wheat.

1. With all of Peter's strong points, he seemed to lack refinement.

a. He began to rebuke the Lord when the Lord began to talk of His death, Jesus responded to him with the words, get thee behind me Satan, for you are an offense to Me for you cannot discern between that which of God and that which of man.

b. When Jesus washed the feet of His disciples, when He came to Peter, Peter said, "You will never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "If I do not wash your feet, then you have no part with Me."

2. Today we buy our flour already milled, presifted, and ready for use.

3. In those days they would take the raw grain from which the chaff may not be thoroughly removed, and grind it into flour with mill stones.

a. The flour may have some chaff still clinging

to the grain. Their may be larger grains that

were not completely ground into flour.

b. It is possible that there would be small pieces

of gravel mixed in with the grain, so that

sifting of the ground wheat was very necessary.

c. Satan was desiring to catch Peter in his rough

state and separate Him from the Lord.

II. The comforting words of Jesus to Peter, "I have prayed for you." A. What was His prayer for Peter?

"That your faith fail you not." 1. It is interesting to me what Jesus did not pray for. a. He did not pray that Satan would not put him through the sieve. That is probably what I would have prayed. b. Lord let him have the easy road, no hard testings or trials. c. Lord keep him from all suffering and pain. d. I through prayer could keep him in a spiritual state of immaturity, for our growth comes through trials. 2.

It is interesting to me that later Peter wrote, 1PE 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 1PE 4:13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. 1PE 4:14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy [are ye]; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. 2.

Peter had come to learn the value of being tested. B. It is as though the Lord is saying to Peter, Satan knows your rough parts, and desires to take advantage of that to separate you from Me. 1. I also know your rough parts and the weakness of your flesh, I know that before the sun rises tomorrow morning you will have slept when you should have been praying, you will be drawing and using your sword at an inappropriate time and you will have denied Me three times. 2. Satan is going to take you through the sieve, but I am praying for you.

B. What must it be like to hear the Lord saying, "I have been praying for you." 1. I am constantly receiving letters from all over the world, from people who say they are praying for me. 2. Many people come up to me and say that they pray daily for me. a. You cannot know how wonderful that makes me feel to know that so many people are praying for me. b. No wonder God is blessing me so. 3. But wouldn't you love to hear Jesus say, "I have been praying for you." C. The beautiful and glorious truth of the matter is that He has and is praying for you. 1.

In John 17 as Jesus was praying for His disciples He said, "Neither do I pray for these alone, but for all of those which shall believe on Me through their words." 2. The things that He prayed for you. a. That you might be one in Him. b. That the Father might give to you the glory that He gave to Him. c. That we might be made perfect in Him. d. That we might be with Him in heaven to see Him in His preincarnate glory. e. That God's love might indwell us. d. That He might indwell us. 3.

Paul questioned, "Who is he that condemneth?" He then declared, "It is Christ who has died, and is risen again and is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." 4. In the book of

Hebrews the writer declares that He is able to save to the uttermost, all who will come unto God by Him seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for us. D. Jesus prayed for Peter that his faith would not fail him. 1. He knew that Peter would deny Him. 2. He knew that in the hour of failure Satan likes to move in with great force to condemn us. a.

He is always using our failures as a wedge to drive us away from the Lord. b. Every time you sin, you can be sure he is going to move in on you condemning you, and asking, "How can you ever expect God to do anything for you, when you have failed Him so many times." c. He loves to move in with discouragement and say, "You might as well give up, you are never going to make it. Look how hard you have tried and you still sin miserably. God wants nothing to do with you, He has given up on you." 3.

Jesus knew the great test that Peter would be facing and how He would fail that test, and thus come under heavy attack from the enemy, as Satan would seek to sift him like wheat. 4. It should be noted that Peter's courage failed him. a. This was perhaps one of the strongest natural traits in Peter's life. b. He was ready to step out on the stormy sea at the bidding of Jesus. c. He was ready to take on the whole band of soldiers who came to arrest Jesus. d. Peter was naturally a very courageous man.

It is interesting that Satan often attacks us in the place of our greatest natural strength, and their defeats us. e. I believe that we are often defeated in the place of our greatest natural strength, for we often have confidence in our ability and do not feel the need of relying on the Lord in those places. We are thus prone to have confidence in the strength of our own flesh. 5. Though his courage failed him, his faith did not fail him. a. We often fail when sifted by Satan, but with the Lord praying for us we always come up stronger as a result of the testing. b.

That is one of the purposes that He has in letting Satan sift us, that we might discover that even in our places of greatest strength, we need to rely on Him, and are thus much stronger in the end. c. It is interesting to note that Peter was later brought back to the same place where his courage failed, there in the presence of the religious council of Jerusalem. We hear him making one of the boldest testimonies of Jesus, he was so bold that the council marveled.

III. The words of exhortation to Peter, "When you are converted, strengthen your brethren."

A. Another purpose that the Lord often has in allowing us to go through the sieve is to give us understanding and empathy for those who are going through similar experiences.

1. Hebrews tells us that Jesus Himself suffered being tempted, so that He might assist those who are tempted.

HEB 4:15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted

like as [we are, yet] without sin.

HEB 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

2. Why, because He knows our frame that we are but dust.

He knows what it is to be put through Satan's sieve.

He certainly went through it.

3. Paul writing to the Corinthians declared,

2CO 1:3 Blessed [be] God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

2CO 1:4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

2CO 1:5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

2CO 1:6 And whether we be afflicted, [it is] for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, [it is] for your consolation and salvation.

B. We as Peter may be defeated in a few battles along the way, but the ultimate victory belongs to us for Jesus is praying for us that our faith will not fail.

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