

"The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep" John 21: 17 NIV

The apostle Peter probably felt terrible about how he abandoned Jesus in Jesus' greatest hour of need during Jesus suffering and death. In fact just before Jesus was arrested, Peter was the most vocal in saying that if "all abandon you, I will not". Yet too soon the opposite was true. When Peter followed Jesus to the courtyard, he very quickly and very willingly denied Jesus when confronted by bystanders.

One can imagine when Peter understood that Jesus rose from the dead, he must have felt lower than low, as I think all of us would in that situation. I wonder how he must of thought, as one gospel tells us, when he heard HIS name in the message from angel to the women; "Go and tell his disciples and *Peter*...." (Mark 16:7). Peter knew how badly he dropped the ball in denying Jesus. Perhaps when he heard that he might have reacted with the words "oh boy, he mentioned my name! I am really going to get it!"

However as the story unfolds with Jesus at the Sea of Tiberius, Peter and Jesus do have that fateful meeting (John 21). What is missing from Jesus "restoration" of Peter is any word mentioning what Peter did. Rather Jesus restores Peter by acknowledging what is really at the core of Peter's commitment to Jesus, his love for his Lord and Savior. So not only is Peter restored, the guilt and sting of Peter's betrayal is past history.

In Jesus' action we see something in the person of God that is very helpful, healing and hopeful; God is a god of "second chances".

It easy to forget that truth because most times when we "mess-up", or "sin" (or however you want to put it) we feel as if it's the "end of the line" or give up every trying again so we feel like we want to "lock the door and throw away the key". The devil is also very good about enforcing those feelings those kind of feelings too.

Jesus constantly gave "second chances" to people others had written off during his ministry on earth. Paul wrote a letter to one of his well to do fellow Christians to give that person's slave a second chance after the slave ran away and possibly stole from him.

Quite frankly I myself would have given up on my walk with Jesus a long time ago, if I myself hadn't experienced the "God of second chances" in my life.

What deep down has convinced you, you can never draw close to God again, or you feel as if you let God down?

Take it to God in humility, love and repentance. When you do you will only hear Jesus love for you and the invitation to start anew.

Remember the verse said "FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD"... that includes you!

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