

**LORD JESUS,
ABIDE
WITH ME**

LENTEN DEVOTION #2

**JESUS GRACIOUSLY LOOKED AT PETER
AND PETER REPENTED**

MARCH 19-20, 2019

Morning Devotion

OPENING RESPONSE

L: God, our Father, each day is a gift of Your grace.

G: Your mercies are new every morning.

L: Guide our steps by the light of Your Word.

G: Shield us from harm and keep us from evil.

L: Better than life is Your love.

**G: Put joy in our hearts and praise on our lips.
Amen.**

PRAYER FOR GRACE

L: O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, You have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with Your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in Your sight, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.

G: Amen.

Evening Devotion

OPENING RESPONSE

L: Lord Jesus, You are the light of the world,

G: The light no darkness can overcome.

L: Stay with us, for it is evening,

G: And the day is almost over.

L: Let Your light scatter the darkness.

G: Let it shine in our hearts and lives. Amen.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

L: Lord God, all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works come from You. Give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments. Defend us also from the fear of our enemies, that we may live in peace and quietness, through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G: Amen.



1 When o'er my sins I sor - row, Lord, I will
 2 Oh, what a mar - v'lous of - f'ring! Be - hold, the
 3 My man - i - fold trans - gres - sion Hence - forth can
 4 There - fore I will for - ev - er Give thanks con



look to you And hence my com - fort bor - row
 Mas - ter spares His ser - vants, and their suf - f'ring
 harm me none Since Je - sus' blood - y pas - sion
 tin - ual - ly, O Je - sus, lov - ing Sav - ior,



That you were slain for me. Your pre - cious
 And grief for them he bears. Our God comes
 For me God's grace has won. His blood my
 For what you did for me. I'll spend my



blood was of - fered For me, oh, most un -
 down from heav - en; For me, his guilt - y
 debt has can - celed; Of hell and all its
 breath in prais - es For your sad cry, your



wor - thy, To take a - way my guilt.
 crea - ture, He deigns as man to die.
 tor - ments I am no more a - fraid.
 suf - f'ring, Your wounds, your guilt - less death.

Text: Justus Gesenius, 1601-73, abr.; tr. composite.
 Tune: HERR CHRIST, DER EINIG GOTTS SOHN (76 76 776) *Eyn Enchiridion oder Handbüchlein*, Erfurt, 1524, alt.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

Luke 22:61-62 (NIV)

The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." ⁶² And he went outside and wept bitterly.

DEVOTION – JESUS GRACIOUSLY LOOKED AT PETER AND PETER REPENTED

Severe and painful was the suffering which our Savior had to endure in His body. Think of how He was scourged with cruel whips, so that the blood streamed out of His back. Think of the crown of thorns placed on His head and unmercifully pressed into His scalp causing blood to flow. Think of how He was blindfolded and then spit upon, slapped, and mistreated to an unbelievable degree. But even much more severe and painful was the suffering He endured in His soul over the grief of the sins He was bearing as we witness in the Garden of Gethsemane when He prayed so fervently that His sweat became as drops of blood. Jesus endured the full burden of God's wrath over and against the sins of the world.

That suffering in his soul was increased by the sins of his own disciples. He had three of them accompany Him in the garden to watch and pray with Him during His struggle in Gethsemane. But when He returned to them after each prayer, they were instead sleeping. Then, another of His own disciples shamefully betrayed Him to His enemies for 30 pieces of silver and carried out this treacherous act with a hypocritical kiss. Following His capture, all of the disciples (who had earlier that very evening promised never to leave Him or be offended because of Him) fled out of fear! On top of all this, to fill his soul with the deepest sorrow, Peter, His dear friend, in spite of the warning Jesus had given him in advance denied Him three times.

When this happened, Jesus did not turn against Peter but rather came to his aid when he needed Him most. This evening, on the basis of our text, we wish to consider how **Jesus graciously looked at Peter and Peter repented.**

Why is it so important, when we stumble, to have someone there to see us stumbling, catch us, and help us back to our feet?

What major implications does this have for us in respect to the relationships we have and build with other people?

From the Passion history, we learned that after Jesus' capture, Peter followed from a distance. When we think back to his former association with Jesus, we might have expected something different. We might expect to find Peter at Jesus' side. For example, when many followers of Jesus began to leave Him after He had told them that He was the Bread of Life, Jesus asked His disciples, **You do not want to leave too, do you?** and it was Peter who immediately responded, **Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of everlasting life. And we have come to believe and to know that You are the**

Christ the Son of the living God (Jn 6:67-69). On another occasion when Jesus asked His disciples, **Who do you say that I am?** It was Peter again who spoke for all of them saying, **You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!** (Mt 16:15-16). There was no hesitation, no fear, no doubt, only a firm conviction that Jesus was the Messiah, the one promised by God to save all mankind from sin. And yet now, it was Peter who so shamefully denied Jesus.

Peter had been very earnest when he told Jesus, **Even if I have to die with You, I will never disown you** (Mt 26:35). This was a beautiful statement on the part of Peter, revealing his love for Jesus. But Peter's trouble was his self-trust, his pride in his own strength and ability. But how well we know that **pride goes before the fall** (Prov 16:18). Peter thought the others may be cowards and weaklings and might deny the Lord, but that he never would. He felt that he was different, that his faith was too strong to ever give way.

But what did happen? We know the story, don't we? Peter was sitting before a fire of coals in the courtyard of the high priest. A serving girl came up and recognized him as a disciple of Jesus. Here was an opportunity for Peter to confess his Savior, to put his money where his mouth had been, but instead he denied Him. Peter said he never knew Jesus. And then he did it again and then again, the third time even cursing and swearing that he did not know who Jesus was. No sword was pointed at his chest. No horrible torture faced him. Just some words from a young girl and a few other bystanders caused him to renounce his discipleship. Not once, not twice, but three times. How terrible! What an unexpected turn of events! There was Jesus, bound at the mercy of the elders and the chief priests, and Peter, just as Jesus had warned him, was offended at the sight and denied him.

Oh, how we are to learn from this! How often do we hear others say or perhaps even say ourselves, "I'll never give up my church or my faith! Others may, but I never will!" That is the first step of walking the same path Peter walked. So often in our life situations we, too, are afraid to confess our Lord and our faith. When the conversation is about our faith or our church or about some teaching or custom of our church, and we see someone lift an eyebrow or challenge our position, how often do we boldly testify of what we have heard and seen? When people ridicule us for our faith or our Christian convictions and laugh at us for seeking to live a Christian life, how often aren't we hesitant or even afraid to stand up and be counted a disciple of Christ? At times we even find ourselves joining in with such people, talking the same kind of language they talk, and going to the same kind of places they go.

What types of situations have you found to be the most trying or tempting for you when it comes to standing firm as a believer? Knowing which scenarios tempt us more than others, what are we able to do with that information?

Rather than boasting that we shall never fall, may we humbly approach God's throne of grace and together pray: ***Oh Lord, forgive me all my sins and shortcomings. So often I am weak and afraid to confess Your name. Too often my life and my actions deny you. Abide with me always and give me the strength and courage to unhesitatingly share my faith whenever I have the opportunity. Amen.***

Such a prayer is necessary for us. The Lord still tells us, **Watch and pray, so that you will not fall into temptation. The Spirit is willing but the flesh is weak** (Mt 26:41). Put yourself in Peter's position. Picture such a crowd, a mob not thinking of what they were doing, but blindly following the lead of Satan and those who had rejected Christ. They have but one thought in their minds, namely, to

get Jesus out of the way. To kill Him. How many of us would have stepped forward and boldly confessed that we belong to Him? I'm afraid many of us would have responded as Peter did, would have denied Him and said, **I don't know the man**, in order to save our own lives.

But thanks be to God, we have a merciful and a forgiving Savior. Instead of casting us out as we have deserved, He bids us come to Him to find rest for our sin-burdened souls.

Somewhere near the high priest's courtyard, a rooster crowed. Our compassionate Savior looked over to His struggling disciple. Peter remembered the words Jesus had spoken to him just hours before in the garden, **before the rooster crows today, you will disown Me three times** (Mt 26:34). What words would that simple look have communicated? "See what you've done! You *have* denied Me, Peter. You have loved your own safety, your own life, more than Me. I saw it all, Peter. I know what happened." Some time later, as he spoke with Jesus after His resurrection, Peter confessed, **Lord, You know all things** (Jn 21:17). At that time, he was speaking of the love he bore in his heart for Jesus, a love which he knew Jesus knew. But now at the crow of the rooster and the look from his Master, he knew from sad experience that His Lord knew even the weak and sinful thoughts of a man's heart.

But Peter also learned of His grace and mercy. **The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter** (Lk 22:61). That was a look of love and mercy. There, dear friends, we get a glimpse into the heart of Jesus. He has taken the whole burden of our sins upon His shoulders. He has carried all our names upon His heart. The sinful woes of every person, yours and mine, He has born in love and concern for our misery. Such a heart, full of love and compassion, turned to the dying thief on the cross and said, **Today you will be with Me in paradise** (Lk 23:43). Such a heart, full of love, remembered His mother and placed her into John's care at the foot of the cross (Jn 19:26-27). Such a heart, full of love, caused Him to leave His heavenly home and come into this world to suffer and die for our sins.

Such a heart, full of love, melted Peter's heart and filled him with true sorrow and contrition. Our text tells us, **Peter went outside and wept bitterly**. This sorrow, those tears tell us of the love in that look from Jesus. It was a look of great and warm love, a look of sincere compassion, a look filled with heartfelt comfort. And Peter tells us about it in his own words when he calls Jesus the Shepherd and Overseer of souls (1 Pe 2:25). There he praises and exalts the Lord who has rescued him as a shepherd rescues a wandering sheep, with that gracious glance of love and had led him to true and saving repentance.

The eyes of the Lord never deceive. The attitude, the deep feeling, and the concern of His heart toward Peter were exactly what His eyes told Peter. In the midst of His passion, Jesus was full of sincere and compassionate sympathy towards the disciple who had just denied Him.

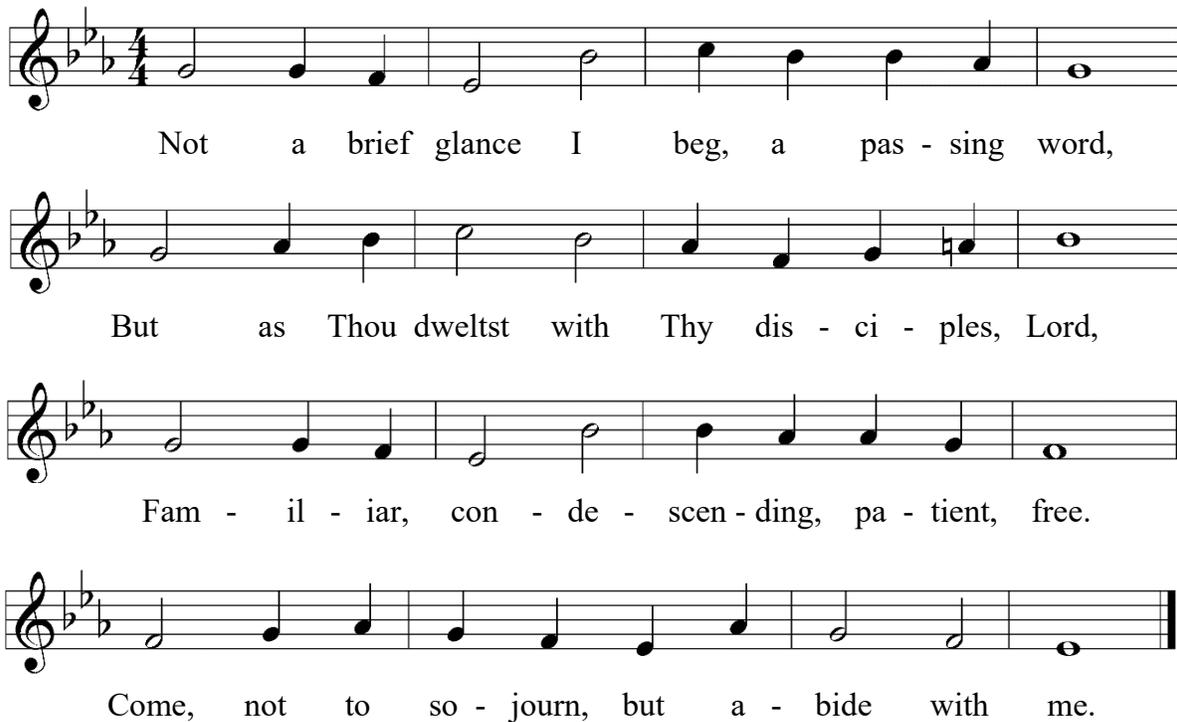
How blessed was Peter! How blessed are we! What the Lord was to Peter, He is to all. He is the same Shepherd and Overseer of our souls. In such confidence and faith, entrust yourself fully to Him. Turn to Him and surrender yourself into His hands. You can trust His heart which beats with love and compassion for you. Then follow His guidance and direction. Listen to His warnings and admonitions. To you, too, Jesus says, **the spirit is willing but the body is weak**. To you and to me He says, **Do not depend on yourselves but on God, who raises the dead** (2 Co 1:9). We, of course, always have a different idea about ourselves. We say, "though all should forsake Jesus, I will never do it." When people say of us, "so and so is a good Christian; you can rely on him or her," we love to hear such flattery. So often we think, "I can depend on myself." But here again Jesus is teaching us, that's

not true, my daughter, my son. There is no depending on yourself. Your faith, too, is often weak. **Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall** (Prov 16:18). Think of Peter!

What role does pride play in our relationship with Jesus?

But when we do fall (and who is there among us who hasn't?), then do as Peter did. He felt deep sorrow over his sin. He repented. The Lord turned and looked upon Peter. That look saved Peter. It spoke of pardon and forgiveness. It saved him from despairing as Judas did. Although his terrible sin grieved him, that look of love sustained him and comforted him.

In Jesus, there is hope and comfort for us all. In a few moments we will sing and pray, *When you see me waver, with a look recall*. Through some dear friend, through a father or a mother, through His Word, Jesus is still giving us that look of love.



Not a brief glance I beg, a pas - sing word,
But as Thou dweltst with Thy dis - ci - ples, Lord,
Fam - il - iar, con - de - scen - ding, pa - tient, free.
Come, not to so - journ, but a - bide with me.

Closing Prayer:

Lord, in Your rich grace and mercy abide with us and look upon us with Your love, mercy, compassion, and forgiveness. May that look sustain us through all the trials and temptations of life. Lord Jesus, abide with Your grace and mercy now and forever.

CONFESSION OF SINS AND ABSOLUTION

G: O Lord, hear my prayer, listen to my cry for mercy, and in Your faithfulness, come to my relief. Do not bring Your servant into judgment, for no one living is righteous before you. Answer me quickly, O Lord; my spirit fails. Do not hide Your face from me, for I have put my trust in You. Show me the way I should go, for to You I lift up my soul. Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God.

Almighty God, merciful Father, I, a troubled and repentant sinner, confess that I have sinned against You in my thoughts, my words, and my actions. I have not loved You with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I am distressed by the sins that trouble me and am deeply sorry for them.

Silence for private meditation and confession.

L: Jesus says to His people: “If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven.” His death paid for the guilt of your sins and the sins of the whole world. Do you believe this?

G: Yes, I believe.

L: Because of the promise of our Savior Jesus, I forgive you all your sins. Be assured that you are a dear child of God and an heir of eternal life.

LUTHER’S MORNING PRAYER

In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. Into Your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

BLESSING

May the love of the Lord Jesus draw us to Himself. May the power of the Lord Jesus make us strong to do His will. May the peace of the Lord Jesus fill our lives.

Amen.

LUTHER’S EVENING PRAYER

In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins, and graciously keep me this night. Into Your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

BLESSING

May the blessing of the eternal God be upon us:
His light to guide us,
His presence to shelter us,
His peace to unite us.

Amen.



1 In the hour of tri - al, Je - sus, plead for me
 2 With for - bid - den plea - sures Should this vain world charm
 3 Should your mer - cy send me Sor - row, toil, and woe,
 4 When my life is end - ing, Though in grief or pain,



Lest by base de - ni - al I un - wor - thy be.
 Or its tempt - ing trea - sures Spread to work me harm,
 Or should pain at - tend me On my path be - low,
 When my bod - y chang - es Back to dust a - gain,



When you see me wa - ver, With a look re - call,
 Bring to my re - mem - brance Sad Geth - sem - a - ne
 Grant that I may nev - er Fail your cross to view;
 On your truth re - ly - ing, Through that mor - tal strife,



Nor for fear or fa - vor Ev - er let me fall.
 Or, in dark - er sem - blance, Cross-crowned Cal - va - ry.
 Grant that I may ev - er Cast my care on you.
 Je - sus, take me, dy - ing, To e - ter - nal life.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt.
 Tune: ST. MARY MAGDALENE (65 65 D) John B. Dykes, 1823–76.