

With wings *of an eagle*

Part 2 of 12

Peter

Disappointing the ones you love



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Ps Roger Spackman
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Can I open today's Bible Workshop by sharing a *word of encouragement* that God has very strongly placed upon my heart during the week as I was *praying and preparing* for today?

Some people have a *distorted* image of who they really are.

Some people believe that they are *not worthy* of God's love, of His forgiveness, restoration and the Abundant Life He so freely offers.

And while there are many reasons, experiences and causes for this distorted self image...

...the root of your situation is possibly *trust*.

Your trust has been *broken*. Your trust has been *betrayed*.

The result is that you don't fully know *who* to trust anymore, *how* to trust and how *much* to trust.

I think you need to hear this: Today – you can trust *God*. Today you can trust *me* as I bring you God's Word.

The image I had as I was praying for you during the week, is of person in a small boat – tied up alongside a jetty or the wharf of a beach.

You *so much* want to start the journey – to step out and begin the adventure – but you are still tied up to the jetty – huddled in the security of your own restrictions and limitations.

You need to untie those ropes that hold you bound, and you need to *throw* them, *cast* them off and allow yourself to float on the ocean of God's grace and His love.

In fact, this is the exact imagery and example of 1st Peter 5:7;

Cast all your anxiety – all your cares and frustrations upon Him because he cares for you.

Slide # 2

May the ropes be cast off, and the grave clothes unwound from your heart, mind and spirit today.

So - welcome to our second Interactive Bible Workshop in our With Wings of an Eagle *Bible* series.

It is *interactive*, in that *you* get to interact, respond and shape the direction of the sermon today.

I am interested in what *you* have to say, and what God is doing in and through *your* life.

You know – I've been *betrayed* before.

Terribly betrayed!

Even offered police protection if I would testify in a court of law against my pastor whom I worked for *as a young man*.

That's hard to deal with.

That makes it hard to *trust* again, let alone continue going to church and becoming a pastor myself.

It was a horrible realisation that I had a profound distrust of pastors and church leaders – *and then became one myself.*

It took me years to be able to trust *myself* as a pastor.

Honestly.

Learning to trust others, and learning to trust yourself.

Maybe *you've* been betrayed too.

Maybe even by a pastor or church situation.

Perhaps an unfaithful spouse!

A trusted friend?

A parent or relative?

Often times that betrayal becomes like a rock smashed against the *clock-face* of time.

And for us, time – and pain - stands still – *stuck* in our past.

Unable to move on – *unable* to enter into new relationships, new churches or new freedom.

Unknowingly or unwillingly projecting this past pain upon any person or situation that *reminds* you of that past experience.

Betrayal is *horribly* painful.

Betrayal is also a wonderful opportunity for *growth* and *maturity*.

Learning *how* to let go, *how* to trust again - and *how* to forgive.

It really is – break *down* – or break *free*!

Our abiding principle for today is:-

Slide # 3

Abiding Principle:

The ability to know *who* to trust, and *how much* to trust others – is one of the hardest, yet most important skills we need to learn in life.

Just one powerful insight for today is:-

Slide # 4

Insight:

Everybody is trustworthy is something, nobody is trustworthy in everything.

Actually, I want to add just *one more* important insight:

Slide # 5

Forgiving someone doesn't mean you have to – or even should – trust them again.

Now, let's take a Look at the disciple of Jesus, *Peter*!

The apostle Peter was a man of *intense* passion.

If he had a mission statement for his life – it might be:

Slide # 6

Unless you're living on the edge – you're taking up too much room!

Or maybe even:

Slide # 7

I'd rather burn out than rust away!

Peter invested 100% into everything he did.

People like Peter, who live *in extremes*, are always familiar with the exhilaration of success, and the sting of defeat – mainly due to the *all or nothing* way they (we) approach life.

During his ministry, Peter experienced a miraculous jail break, Pentecostal fire, evangelistic revival *and* intense persecution. He was one of the *inner three* disciples, and an eyewitness of both the transfiguration *and* the resurrected Jesus Christ.

Peter was fiercely loyal to the cause, and to Jesus.

He was also the most *outspoken* about his commitment!

Peter announced that he would even *die* for his Master if need-be, a promise he was later called upon to fulfil.

But in spite of the depth of his commitment and the fervour of his devotion, Peter *failed* our Lord in a profoundly personal and painful way.

It wasn't just a failure of duty, not doing what was expected of him.

Peter's failure was *a breach of trust*.

Peter *consciously* denied the love, friendship and loyalty that existed between himself and our Lord.

Slide # 8

Betrayal.

He even denied three times that he ever *knew* his Lord.

Slide # 9

Because of this, Peter remains forever of an example of how to cope when we disappoint the ones we love.

Both how to *overcome* the personal pain of when we disappoint those we love.

And how we can overcome the pain and offer forgiveness and reconciliation towards those *who let us down* and *disappoint us*.

Let's read Matthew 26:57-75 together :-

And as we do, let us be reminded that the Bible promises us that our faith to obey and trust God will be increased as we listen to the preaching and teaching of His holy Word! (Romans 10:17)

57 ¶ Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of the law and the elders had assembled.

58 But Peter followed him at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high priest. He entered and sat down with the guards to see the outcome.

59 The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death.

60 But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward

61 and declared, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'"

62 Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?"

63 But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, "I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God."

64 "Yes, it is as you say," Jesus replied. "But I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

65 Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy.

66 What do you think?" "He is worthy of death," they answered.

67 Then they spat in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him

68 and said, "Prophecy to us, Christ. Who hit you?"

69 ¶ Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him. "You also were with Jesus of Galilee," she said.

70 But he denied it before them all. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said.

71 Then he went out to the gateway, where another girl saw him and said to the people there, "This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth."

72 He denied it again, with an oath: "I don't know the man!"

73 After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, "Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away."

74 Then he began to call down curses on himself and he swore to them, "I don't know the man!" Immediately a cock crowed.

75 Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the cock crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly.

Let's look at some Scriptures that describe the character of Peter – and in doing so – let's see if the Bible lives up to its claim to be like a mirror – reflecting our true inner image – enabling us to see the true contents of our hearts and lives. (James 1:23)

And in doing so, let us be encouraged and inspired to live as authentic and godly lives as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Slide # 10

1. First - let's pay special attention about the insights we learn about Peter's *own* estimation of himself:

Mark 8:31-34

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John 13:1-9

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Mark 14:27-31

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2. Mark 14:32-42 further describes the circumstances surrounding Peter's denial of Jesus. What can we discover that might explain Peter's failure?

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Slide # 12

3. Something strange about all of this, is that Peter violently confronted the temple guard in the garden as they came to arrest Jesus. Maybe Peter thought this was the opportunity to die for Jesus in the heat of a battle? Yet just a few hours later, Peter publicly denied that he even knew Jesus. Who actually unravelled Peter and initiated the process that ended in his disgrace? (Mark 14:69 – 70)

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Slide # 13

4. From this last point – what principles can we draw from this situation when *we* are tempted to betray the ones we love? (Keeping in mind how prepared Peter was only hours earlier!)

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Slide # 14

5. How do you think Peter felt when the rooster crowed? (Mark 14:72) Why?

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Slide # 15

6. John 21:15-19 contains a beautiful ending to this story. Describe this glorious message of hope for times when we fail in our relationship with God.

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Slide # 16

7. There is genuine encouragement in knowing that when we fail God – He will forgive and accept us back. But what about when we fail others, and they fail us? Are there any safeguards to

prevent this happening> Let's look up the following verses and write at least one principle we can apply to the area of failing others and others failing us.

■ Colossians 3:13

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■ Romans 12:19

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Slide # 17

Learning from Peter

Peter possessed an *inflated* view of his understanding and commitment that was compounded by a *weak grasp* of his own frailty and sin.

Slide # 18

He was vulnerable because he was over
confident.

There is a short verse in the Bible that talks about the consequences of pride – do you know what it is? (Proverbs 16:18)

Just a note: The book of Proverbs are full of probabilities – NOT promises!!! (If you are a *name it and claim it* type of believer, then you have not yet fully grasped the abiding principles of the book of Proverbs :-)

But *Peter* actually believed there were some sins he was *incapable* of committing!

Slide # 19

He was *prepared for the obvious*, but
unprepared for the unexpected.

His *boasting* gave way to cowardice in the blinking of an eye – and he denied the Lord he had promised *to die for*.

But in all of this – God knows that *failure* and *sin* are part of our fallen nature.

Sin is like a man's beard, or the front lawn.

Shave it or mow it one day, and it's back again the next morning – staring you in the face!!

So God restores us whenever we repent and ask forgiveness.

Three times Jesus gave Peter the chance to affirm his love for Him – the same number of times Peter had denied Him.

Application Questions:

Slide # 20

1. Have you failed God in a significant way lately? Are you willing to let Him restore you? What's stopping you?

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Slide # 21

2. Are there any sins that you feel you are safe from and would never commit? Explain why you feel this way, and the possible dangers of this attitude?

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Slide # 22

3. What have you leant today that can help you be restored to someone you have failed, or who has failed you. (REMEMBER – Forgiveness does not mean you have to *trust* them again – this could be dangerous and foolish!)

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Scripture Memory Verse:

Slide # 23

Matthew 5:23-24

"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

Let's pray together and ask God's Spirit to empower us with strength and wisdom.

Amen