

Joke: In heaven, there were two huge signs. The first read, Men Who Did What Their Wives Told Them to Do. . .

The line of men under this sign stretched as far as the eye could see.

The second sign read, Men Who Did What They Wanted to Do. Under that sign stood only one man.

Intrigued, St. Peter goes to the lone man and says, “No one has ever stood under this sign. Please tell me about yourself”

The man shrugged and said, “My wife told me to stand here.”

Simon Peter: It Feels Like Dad Strength

Mark 8:31–33 (NIV): He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. 32 He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

Show video

The word Satan as used in the Bible comes to us from a word in Hebrew that means stumbling block. . .opponent. . .something in the way of your goal.

How many of you ever felt like something or someone was getting in the way of what you were hoping to do?

And when Jesus says to Peter, “Get behind me Satan” he’s basically saying “Get out of my sight!” Your getting in the way of my mission.

Peter is stepping into the path that Jesus is walking and trying to stop Jesus from doing exactly what it was He came to do.

And here’s the thing Jesus goes to the cross by choice. Satan in the desert tempts Jesus to not go through with it. Now Peter the same one who just a few minutes earlier was saying no that can’t be what happens.

And listen, It would have been so easy for Jesus to go off and live a life making tables and chairs. But instead. . .

2 Corinthians 5:21 (TPT): For God made the only one who did not know sin to become sin for us, so that we who did not know righteousness might become the righteousness of God through our union with him.

Think about that. . .he chose to die, to become sin, that we might become the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. So that we can be set free from the law and walk in newness of life.

He could have said no. He even asked the Father if there was another way. Prayed as drops of blood escaped through His pores because He was well aware of what was to take place. And feeling the anguish of it all asked the Father to let this cup pass from him, ultimately said, “not my will by thine be done.”

And think about this it was just a few verses before the one in Mark where this same Peter gets the answer to a question right. Jesus says, "Who do you say I am?"

After letting a few other disciples give wrong answers Peter blurts out "You are the Messiah!"

Jesus then tells him to keep a lid on it. But Peter still thinks Jesus is there to take over the kingdom and start a new one. To overthrow the Roman Empire. That was what they were thinking the mission to be. So Jesus telling them he was going to die was not at all what they were expecting.

No wonder he says what he says to Peter. Peter, or the rest of the disciples for that matter, just didn't understand the mission up this point.

But think about this church, Jesus chose to go to his death so that we could be here. . .so that we could be free and have an abundant life now.

Remember this is Peter we're talking about. Peter, the disciple who most likely had his last words be, 'Hey Y'all watch this.'

That Peter who stepped out of the boat and walked on the water. You have to think when they fished him out of the water the other disciples were giving him a hard time.

That's just the way us guys are to each other. They were laughing at him. Giving poor Pete a hard time. But Peter he was saying, "Three steps! Did you see that? Three steps"

This is Peter who later would stand up, put on his clothes and then jump into the water.

That Peter who witnessed the transfiguration. Saw Jesus standing with Moses and Elijah and his first thought was, "Let's build a gift shop!!"

In the video Peter makes reference to Jesus flooring him, saying, "Not the last time it would happen."

Jesus told Peter to put the sword away.

Jesus would say, "Do you love me with all that you are?"

Every now and then God needs to reach into our lives and gives us a good old fashioned dope-slap. Not that He's angry but to remind us. . .because

We get so focused on the schedule, the celebration, the decorations, vacation, the process of Lent and Easter that Jesus has to reach out and go (NOTE: Mime a dope-slap.) "Hey. Remember me?"

Let's look at another passage. In the 21st chapter of John, and this is soon after Peter gets dressed before jumping in the water, Jesus asks Peter if Peter loves him. There are four words for LOVE in the Bible.

Philos which was like a brotherly love, it was the word used by Jesus for his friend Lazarus, then there is Stoge, that is the love between a parent and child, Eros is the third and it is that physical love, it's where we get the erotic from. Lastly there is Agape that is

the love between God and man. That unconditional love God has for us the love for us that sent him to the cross, to free us from guilt, shame, and sin.

When Jesus asks Peter “Do you love me?” He uses the word Agape. Do you love me without condition.

Peter answers with the word Philos. “Jesus I love you like a brother.”

Jesus asks again as if to say, “No, that’s not what I meant, Peter. Do you love me without condition?”

Again Peter says, “Jesus you’re my bro. You know I do.” Okay that’s a paraphrase maybe but you get the idea.

Finally Jesus says, “Okay, Peter, do you love me like I was your brother?”

Jesus sees that Peter is not able to make that leap just yet. So Jesus meets him where he is. Jesus always meets us where we are.

Peter is a key figure in the very creation of the church. He is the cornerstone. Peter the betrayer, Peter the ear-slicer, Peter the surfer, Peter the fisherman, Peter. . .the one who more than any other disciple needed a good old fashioned dope-slap to get him to pay attention. . .that is the guy Jesus used as the foundation for the church.

And I don’t know about you but that makes me feel pretty good. . .because. . .

We mess up. . .a lot. We doubt. We worry. We have arguments over which hymns are appropriate and whether or not the Sunrise service should be held at Sunrise or an hour later to give people time to wake up.

Jesus is saying, "Wake up! This is important! Listen to what I'm telling you."

The Bible says several times that Jesus would tell a parable and the disciples did not know what he was talking about. Guess who that was. Even after the resurrection it says "but some still doubted."

When Peter walked on the water. . .when he took that step. . .when he became the man Jesus was going to build a church on. . .Jesus was not sitting in the boat saying, "Go." Jesus was standing in the storm saying "Come."

Jesus is calling us into the storm.

It's not supposed to be easy. But it will always be best.

There are too many songs and too many books that seem to say, "Follow Jesus and your problems will be all over." But I don't find that in the Scriptures. As a matter of fact Jesus even said, "in this world you will have troubles." But the good news is he didn't stop with that he continued by saying, "but take heart I have overcome the world."

Jesus never promised to solve your problems for you. But what He did promise is to be beside you when you go through them.

Jesus made the choice to die in the most horrible, painful, humiliating way possible. . .and then He came back. So that we would know it was all true. Everything he said about God and loving each other. That was all true. And it still is.

There is little doubt that the Apostle Peter could ever forget how powerful and strong Jesus truly was in those face to face encounters he had with the Messiah.

The episode being described in the video was a reference to Mark 8:31-38.

We read a few of these verses earlier let's read a little further. . .

Mark 8:31–38 (NIV): He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. 32 He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. 33 But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.” 34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. 36 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? 37 Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? 38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.”

That is a scene filled with power and strength. It follows on the heels of moments that Jesus allowed his disciples to witness miracles, from feeding multitudes to the healing of individuals.

And before the minds of the disciples went too far off track thinking that Jesus was the Messiah who was ready to throw his strength around, conquer their oppressors and control the masses by force, he tried to redirect their misconceptions and point them to the reality of what was on the horizon.

What Jesus would share with his disciples would not be what they had been concocting in their minds. Surely a Messiah would be triumphant. Surely a Messiah would be a conqueror. Surely a Messiah would not be acquainted with suffering, rejection and death.

But Jesus was about to redirect his disciples expectations and help them see clearly what was about to unfold before their very eyes. So could get ready to carry on the mission when Jesus was no longer able to.

His words and his life would soon make a powerful impression.

Mark 8:31–32 (NIV): He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. 32 He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

Jesus did not want there to be any misunderstandings about what was to take place. There were no riddles. This was not one of those

moments where Jesus shared a parable and left the guys scratching their heads in wonder.

Verse 32 says Jesus taught this lesson about what was coming plainly and said that suffering, rejection, death and resurrection were all a part of what lay ahead for him in Jerusalem.

Jesus wanted this message to be comprehended by his followers so clearly that he retells them the same message in Mark chapters 9 and 10 as well.

Three times he shares the same lesson with his disciples and it was not until after these events come to pass that his disciples remember the words Jesus spoke to them.

The reason Jesus' disciples had such a hard time understanding what they were hearing is because a forecast of suffering, rejection, death and resurrection of their Messiah was the very opposite of what they had been experiencing with Jesus thus far on their journey.

They had seen the crowds gathering and following because Jesus not only was speaking messages of truth and hope, but also was feeding hungry mouths and healing lives that needed something only the Messiah could do.

However, it is interesting that Jesus referred to himself in this passage and others not as the Messiah, but as "Son of Man."

This expression is by far Jesus' favorite description of himself if we base it on the number of times he used it about himself. It occurs 81

times in the Gospels and neither his friends nor his enemies ever refer to him in this way.

One of the reasons Jesus may have referred to himself as “Son of Man” rather than “Messiah” is because the former was not nearly as politically volatile as the latter.

Jesus’ actions and teachings were attracting large crowds and gaining much popularity. For him to champion himself as the Messiah too early would have created a mob scene that would not have allowed him to prepare his disciples for what was to come with that deliberate pace and precision it was going for.

He was working his way to the cross but needed the time to prepare his disciples to carry on the message and mission afterwards. This is why he kept telling his disciples not to tell anybody about what they were talking about and experiencing with Jesus yet.

The time had not yet come for such things to be announced.

Even though Jesus told his disciples exactly what was going to happen and by whom the suffering would be extended, they just sat there shaking their heads in disbelief because it all seemed so foreign to their mental image of the Messiah. By the way that’s why other’s couldn’t wrap their head around the fact that he was the Messiah because their image of what they expected wasn’t what Jesus gave.

And as a result, Peter pipes up, as he so often was prone to do. The last part of half of verse 32 says,

Mark 8:32 (NIV): . . .and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

The word rebuke is epitimao and is the same word that was used for silencing of the demons in Mark 1:25 and 3:12.

And then Jesus. . .look again at verse 33

Mark 8:33 (NIV): But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

Jesus made sure all the disciples were within earshot and the reason this was such a moment of power by Jesus was because Jesus recognized Peter was being used by Satan to try and do the very thing that Satan did after Jesus was baptized and led into the wilderness for 40 days.

Satan was using Peter to try and dissuade Jesus from going to the cross by redirecting his thoughts from the things of God and onto the things of man.

This was the same temptation Jesus experienced from Satan at the outset of his ministry.

And listen church, the enemy does the same thing today. He will push thoughts in your head to get you to question God, put people in your live to distract you from fulfilling your purpose.

Although last week’s message from Mark 1:9-15 recounts this endeavor, the Gospel of Matthew has similar language in Chapter 4 that we just heard Jesus say to Peter in the Mark 8 passage.

Let's look at. . .

Matthew 4:8–10 (NIV): Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” 10 Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

In both accounts Satan was trying to tempt Jesus to abandon the mission that leads to the cross. At the beginning of Jesus' ministry Satan tempted Jesus three times in the wilderness. It ended with Jesus demanding Satan leave. And now toward the end of Jesus' ministry, Jesus is tempted again by the influence of Satan through Peter. Jesus calls him out in the form of a rebuke and again demands Satan get in the rear view mirror of their path ultimately leading towards Calvary and the cross.

Peter felt the weight of Jesus' strength. He felt it in Jesus words and in his countenance that was filled with spiritual authority and intensity.

It was strength from God the Father. It was dad strength personified.

And it slammed Peter on the inside. It would not be the last time Peter felt such Dad strength when Jesus “turned” as verse 33 noted.

The Gospel of Luke notes another time when Jesus would turn and Peter would experience the dad strength of Jesus. It would not be through the spoken words of Jesus in this moment; rather, the dad

strength would overpower Peter simply through the locking of their eyes upon each other.

It happened after the Last Supper. Jesus told Peter he would deny him before the rooster crowed that very night. Peter said it would not happen no matter what.

In a sense, Peter told Jesus, “No, Lord.”

While Jesus was being brought before the high priest in his house, Peter was following at a distance and warming himself by the fire in the courtyard. He was trying to hear and see what was going to happen to Jesus. Those around the fire recognized Peter as one of Jesus’ followers. Peter repeatedly denies this accusation of being one of Jesus’ followers.

Luke 22:60–62 (NIV): Peter replied, “Man, I don’t know what you’re talking about!” Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed.
61 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.

I can imagine Peter thinking what have I done. I said that I would never deny him.

The dad strength of Jesus struck Peter again through eye contact and remembering what Jesus has said. Sometimes the strength of a look in the eye is every bit as powerful as a word that is spoken. Looks and words are at times more powerful than even physical strength.

But let me just pause here a minute and tell you this, it won't be too long before Jesus after the resurrection says, go tell the disciples and Peter.

I love that. . . God responds to the regrets, and doubts of this one disciple after he left Jesus in his time of need. With all his failures Jesus still called him the rock.

And church Jesus does the same for you and I he knows us by name, sees our mistakes and lives us still. The one who knows us best loves us the most.

In the Mark 8 scene, the rebuke to Peter by Jesus impacted him and the other disciples who listened to what Jesus had to say with such authority.

“Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.” Mark 8:33

Just as Satan tried to get Jesus to focus on the things of man while he tempted Jesus in the wilderness, Peter was talking about similar things in this part of the story.

Peter could see power and honor on the horizon with Jesus, not suffering, rejection and death. But Jesus saw such things that was formulating in Peter's mind as being in conflict with the mission of God and the redemption, rescue, and salvation of humanity from sin, death, Satan and hell.

Jesus had a focused mission he intended to accomplish; nothing was going to thwart his mission that was in line with the things of God.

Yes, the things of God at this point in time included suffering, rejection, and death. Surely Peter had heard of Isaiah 53 that foretells all of these things in this passage concerning the Suffering Servant of God.

However, it is not difficult to move the focus of one's mind from the things of God and onto the things of man whether a first or twenty first century follower of Jesus. We tend to get so easily distracted.

So, Jesus would make clear what those on the side of God needed to do.

Mark 8:34–38 (NIV): Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. 36 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? 37 Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? 38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels.”

In these final verses of our text, Jesus articulates what it means to be a true disciple. Simply put, it's allowing Christ to rule in your heart and mind. You love that things He loves, think like He thinks. It's submitting to the power and strength of our heavenly Father.

That coupled with the invitation by Jesus to “Follow me,” leads to an opportunity to make it our habit to follow in the same form of Jesus.

Bearing the cross is not about a dying daily theology as some have taught. It is about death. Jesus took his cross to Calvary and it stayed there. He is no longer attached to it. He died and then rose again to give us new life. And when you follow Him. When you have made up your mind to allow Him to be Lord in your life your old nature died. You became a new creation. A child of God. There is not a daily cross to bear.

Romans 6:6–7 (NLT): We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. 7 For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin.

It is an exchange for a new life that is lived and experienced in the power of our Heavenly Papa's strength. Such a life leads to and ends in glory.

In the end, our Messiah, the Son of Man, will return in power and with great strength that we all will experience in great glory.

This, too, will pin us in amazement of the dad strength that our glorious God will exhibit on that day.

Until then, we should not be surprised when we as followers of Jesus also encounter suffering, rejection or maybe even death for our alignment with our Savior.

Ultimately, those who have put their faith, hope and trust in Jesus also will experience resurrection on the final day. Resurrection is a result of dad strength that comes as a gift from our Father in Heaven who knows a thing or two about conquering the grave.

This is a strength and power we as followers of Jesus will remember and rejoice in throughout all eternity.