

Australind Vineyard Christian Fellowship

from the Pastor's heart  The Sword of the Spirit the Word of God

A Crime of Passion



Peter took the sword that night and positioned it where he could easily reach it. He must have felt secure knowing that they were going to a place where it was not going to be safe, particularly because Jesus had stirred up the city against the disciples and Himself through His preaching and miracles. He was very glad for his Master's instructions to bring along the swords. Even though he had experienced the power of His Master who moved in the supernatural, bringing the swords appealed to his carnal nature. He had yet to gain full trust in the abilities of His Master.

Several hours had passed since Jesus and His disciples had come to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. The gang of people from the temple had arrived at the Garden of Gethsemane and were now crowding around Jesus and the disciples. Judas led the group against Jesus in betrayal of his Master so that he could gain a few pieces of silver for himself. **His crime of passion** had always been the love of money that he had hoped would come his way when Jesus would have set up His kingdom on earth. He was convinced of the earthly reign of Jesus but for some time now had been having doubts about it happening. This new line of thought had begun when glimpses of understanding had begun to filter through his greedy mind about some of the aspects of what Jesus had been saying regarding His departure from earth. Realising that this reign of Jesus on earth was not about to happen in the immediate future, he sold Jesus to His enemies for 30 pieces of silver. His crime of passion yielded meagre gains. The guilt however was overwhelming, which he had never expected. This guilt was perpetrated by his act of betrayal but what he did not know was, his betrayal was perpetrated by Satan who had used his love of money against him and Jesus. ***There is always a Judas in the crowd.***

The soldiers from the temple and the crowd that had come to the Garden were demanding that Jesus go with them, back to the temple. It was in this scenario that Peter played his hand and struck with the sword. He managed to cut off the ear of one of the men from the temple. **His crime of passion** led to a miracle right before the eyes of the people gathered in the garden. Jesus calmly picked up the ear and placed it back on the man's head like placing a book back on the shelf. I think everyone was surprised at Jesus.

Why did Jesus allow the swords in the first place? He was not a Man of war! The swords were there to reveal the true nature of Peter's carnal nature. ***There is always a lesson in what Jesus does or instructs.*** God says; it is not by might or strength but by His Spirit. Peter had no idea about what he had done by cutting off the ear of his enemy. The cutting off the ear was the crime of passion of his outer man, the carnal nature. Peter's real crime of passion was not what he had done to the man's ear with the sword but his ultimate denial of Jesus that was to come not long after. This was the crime of passion of the inner man, the spiritual man. Peter by his denial had used the sword of his flesh to expose his true character in denying Jesus under pressure. He was not made of the stuff that he had thought he was. Only recently he had boasted about his loyalty to Jesus by saying, he will never deny Jesus. Yet here he was, hiding himself and denying Him.

Passion has a way of defeating us when we do not understand its workings. When you least expect it, passion **turns you on** to make the mistake of a life time from which there is no way back except through Christ. Many a good Christian has lusted after the flesh only to fall in this manner. They had thought they were in control but never reckoned with the true crime of passion that lurks deep inside each man. This is why zeal without knowledge is a huge problem and leads to death more often than not; that is, death of the body, death of good ideas and good intentions. It would be easy to assume that Peter's crime of denial was on par with the betrayal of Judas. That kind of thinking is far from the truth. Betrayal is an undermining of what is holy in the sight of God. It denotes the base nature of the devil when he rebelled against God in heaven. ***The truth is;***

Denial is an act motivated by fear of the truth that brings to light every hidden motivation and intent of the heart.

That is why the Ostrich buries its head in the sand. Fear motivates it, which is foolishness. The truth sets us free but most people deny the truth and become prisoners to darkness, thereby allowing every evil work to enter their lives. In denying Jesus, Peter thought he could hide the truth about who he really was (which is a disciple of Jesus) but only succeeded in exposing who he really was (which is a coward). He was a very insecure man who had decided to follow Jesus out of his passion of character rather than his understanding of who Jesus is, in spite of revelation that he had received from the Father. He was used to doing things boisterously and portrayed this nature right throughout his walk with Jesus until that time in the garden.

The betrayal by Judas on the other hand was an outright rejection of who Jesus is in the pursuit of his own lust. It was not a denial of his relationship with Jesus but a return to idolatry in seeking his love of money. That is why I believe, the Bible says to us in Matt 6.33 to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. ***This keeps us safe.***

Peter's denial had stemmed from the fact that he had been offered the keys to the kingdom of heaven by Jesus. He had accepted it in the flesh not realising that what Jesus was offering him was to be received through the Spirit of God into his own spirit. He understood this later when he indeed received the Spirit on the day of Pentecost into his own spirit and truly received the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. The lessons Jesus teaches us are often not received by us in the first instance. Look back on your life and see how many times or how long you took to learn a simple lesson that Jesus was teaching you. You will be amazed.

As a result of what Peter thought he had received when Jesus said He would give him the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, he ended up telling the Master what to do about establishing the kingdom of God. He was deciding what the Master should do when he rebuked Jesus about going to the cross *Mat 16:22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. Mat 16:23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.* Peter thought he had the keys to do whatever he pleased and could even tell the Master what to do. Many are making the same mistake today in the way they pray, preach and exercise the gifts and their faith.

*The true crime of passion that the Church suffers today is to think that God has somehow placed within our hands the Kingdom of God **to do as we please.***

This has led to so much sin, false teaching, betrayal of the flock, abuse of the gospel and God's children not to mention manipulation and greed. The list is endless. Jesus the Alpha and the Omega clearly explains to us, this evil nature in our misunderstanding of His instructions given through the Holy Spirit in the book of Revelation. Jesus explained true denial to the disciples but Peter had not picked up on it.

*Mat 16:24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, **let him deny himself,** and take up his cross, and follow me. Mat 16:25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.*

Peter had not understood what Jesus had said and proceeded to deny Jesus just as Jesus had prophesied to him. What I believe is, Satan had targetted Peter as the fall guy but Jesus had prayed for Peter and so he was saved. *Luk 22:31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: Luk 22:32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

When Jesus chooses a person, He prays for that person. This is our comfort, to know that we have an intercessor with God, Jesus the righteous. We will only know how many times He had saved us from Satan through His intercession when we get to heaven. My friends, I am writing this to you because God gave it to me in the early hours of the 8th of August 2012. I believe friends, family or others may have betrayed some of you. Some of you have even been denied your very existence in relationships with one another through rejection by friends and family. This has become a common trait among Christians today. Whatever the perception you have about what has taken place, the Lord wants us to put away our sword of self-righteousness before we commit a crime of passion in deed and in spirit. Because, true denial is against Jesus when we say we are Christians but fail the test like Peter. We are just as capable of denying Christ as the next person. Maybe we hold the keys to the kingdom but we have to ask ourselves if we hold it in God's righteousness or our own.

The truth about Peter's actions is, he was judging others because they had come to crucify Jesus his Master not realising he was carrying in him the seed of denial which would abandon Jesus to the cross. He wanted to protect his Master and in turn protect himself but ended up doing neither. What he did not realise is, a man stands or falls before his own Master. The men who had come to take Jesus away were also before their Master denying His deity just like Peter did later on in the temple. Neither of them (Peter or the group of men) had realised that they were dealing with God who had made them. They acted as though one was better than the other. The truth is that neither was better. Peter and the disciples abandoned Jesus just as much as the others who took Him away. No not one is righteous..... **Rom 3.9:12**

This is an end time message for the preparation of the heart. I for one realise that my crimes of passion have emanated from self-righteousness. To a large degree, I gave myself the power to judge others or deny others. This was the true nature of my self-righteousness. Saul's condition was the same until he met Jesus on the road to Damascus. The truth is, everyone stands or falls before their Master. The question is; whether the crime of passion that one commits is truly what it seems when it is observed without grace or in the flesh like in the case of the woman taken in adultery. It would be a good thing to judge oneself before wielding the sword or casting a stone. Judging oneself takes ABANDONMENT into the hands of God, just like Jesus did, when He let the crowd in the Garden of Gethsemane take Him away to be crucified. He was righteous in Himself but took the form of unrighteousness for our sakes. Be blessed and may God open the eyes of your understanding and give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus.

With love

Pastor Noble 15/02/2015

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