

John 297 “Peter, Down But Not Out” John 18:25-27; James 1:22-25; Philippians 3:7-10

It’s not as if Satan received the same permission as he did in the book of Job but it sure seems as though Peter’s downward spiral is a clear indicator of the fate of those who did not watch and pray with Jesus which certainly added to their surprise and shock at the events to follow.

Peter was awakened out of a deep sleep and when arresting hands were about to be laid on Jesus, he took the law into his own hands, so to speak and courageously but foolishly struck in ignorance.

And this, after Jesus had demonstrated His complete control of the situation by dropping the entire entourage of soldiers with just two words: “I Am”

At the point of Jesus’ arrest, Peter had a sword in his hand and a mental attitude in his mind that would have died fighting for his Lord but now he’s standing around a fire with no weapon and he’s completely defeated because of his fear due to his lack of security.

Peter is not a coward; he’s just lost his security.

Peter is still alive at this time but he’s now identified with no spiritual purpose, so he’s going to deny his Lord who saved him and that in and of itself, makes him indistinguishable from any unbeliever.

**PETER IS UTTERLY DEFEATED AT THIS POINT BUT LET US NEVER FORGET THAT HE’S STILL ALIVE!**

If we fail as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and don’t die as a result, God is NOT finished with us, so why should we give up as if we’re finished with ourselves?

By inappropriately taking up arms to defend Jesus at the wrong time for the wrong reasons, Peter is demonstrating a rationalized expression of vain arrogance.

Vanity is empty pride; it’s pride without even having an excuse for being proud.

All arrogant people appear totally different under pressure but the truth is that pressure doesn’t change us, it only reveals who we really are.

Believers who reject biblical truth are in a state of futility because it’s arrogant to think that we can get along without something that God has provided — our daily spiritual nourishment and spiritual power.

Whether it’s disillusion, boredom, self-pity, loneliness, frustration, discouragement, jealousy or bitterness, one thing is for sure, it will always cause a negative reaction.

Actually, any time we’re bored with life, we’re vulnerable to falling into the trap of an empty, frantic search for happiness that fails every time.

When pride gains complete control of a soul, free will does not operate properly on the basis of dealing with the cold hard facts.

Undistracted loving focus on the Lord Jesus Christ is the highest spiritual function a believer in time can have; it’s the most intimate, personal, focused love a committed disciple can express.

And it’s this undistracted loving focus on Jesus that keeps us thinking objectively about eternal spiritual things and not so much about temporal things on earth.

If we understand this, we will be able to say with the apostle Paul from Philippians 3:7, “But whatever were gains to me, I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.”

Many believers think morality is what the Christian way of life is all about because it appeals to their human self-confidence and requires no spiritual self-discipline in their lives and this leads to their brand of self-righteous arrogant legalism taking over and that’s why they fail so often.

As we solve our problems with God the Father’s grace solutions, we remain occupied with His

Son, Jesus Christ and not pre-occupied with other people or our circumstances and we glorify God!

Morality falsely embraced and therefore mis-applied, inevitably produces pride.

Note that Philippians 3:10 begins with the phrase:

“I want to know Christ” and this means we too like Paul are to come to the point in life where we understand not only Who Jesus Christ is but also what He has done, is doing and will do for us by putting together all the biblical truth we’ve ever learned.

The same divine power that raised Jesus from the dead is now available to every Church Age believer for the purpose of executing the experiential plan of God.