

SERMON:

“I Have
Prayed for You”
Luke 22:31-34
October 19, 2025
Redemption Denver

Pray

Intro- Memorable Conversations

- Everyone here has probably had a few really important conversations. Ones that truly made a difference, maybe even changed the course of your life. Moments that, no matter what, you will never, ever forget
- Jesus' words in this passage are like that for Christians. They certainly were for Peter
- Upper Room Discourse
 - What He told His disciples the night before He went to the Cross and died
 - Some of the most important concepts and practices in Christianity come from here
 - Depicted in all 4 Gospels, the accounts of Jesus' life
- There's something unique about Luke's account
- I think that understanding it leads to some of the most encouraging truths in the Bible

Outline

- Sobering Reality (Truth of Satan, Tactics of Satan)
- Stunning Hope (Jesus Knows, Jesus Prays)

A Sobering Reality

- **v. 31-** “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat”
- Jesus tells Peter that Satan is after him
- This isn't the first time we've seen Satan in Luke's gospel
 - **Luke 8-** Parable of the sower- “the **devil** comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so they may not believe”
 - **Luke 13-** Jesus heals a disabled woman- “a daughter of Abraham whom **Satan** bound for 18 years”
- Most famously- Temptation of Jesus
 - **Luke 4:1-2-** “And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, **being tempted by the devil**”
 - Not the only Gospel that talks about Jesus' temptation
 - But Luke ends the temptation narrative in a unique way- “**when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed...until an opportune time**” (Luke 4:13)
- **Satan lurks in the background of Luke's gospel.**
Waiting. Hidden in the shadows, until *just* the right moment to strike.

- And *now*, on *this* night, the night in which Jesus is betrayed to His death, the opportunity has come
 - Luke 22:3- “**then Satan entered into Judas**, called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve”
 - Luke 22:52b-53- “Have you come out as against a robber, with swords and clubs? When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But **this is your hour, and the hour of darkness**”
- But his strategy is different
 - He’s not going after Jesus directly. He already tried that! It didn’t work. Jesus *defeated* Satan in the wilderness
 - **Instead, Satan goes after the disciples**
 - You see, he can’t get Jesus. So he goes after what Jesus *loves*.
 - **Illustration-** Happens all the time in movies and tv, right? The hero is too strong for the villain. So he goes after the hero’s family.
 - **One of the primary ways Satan seeks to destroy Jesus’s purposes is by destroying those Jesus loves.**
 - He enters into Judas. And he *demand*s to have Peter. When Jesus says Satan demanded to have “you,” that you is plural. **Satan is after all Jesus’ followers.**
- **1 Peter 5:8-9** “Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour
- **Illustration-** the Fellowship of the Ring
 - Frodo is taking the One Ring of Power out of the Shire
 - He meets Aragorn in the inn at Bree
 - Frodo is going along too casually, as if it’s all one great adventure, and Aragon confronts him:
 - F: What do you want?
 - A: A little more caution from you...Are you frightened?
 - F: Yes
 - A: Not nearly frightened enough. ***I know what hunts you....***
 - F: What are they?
 - A: They were once men, great kings of men. Then Sauron the deceiver gave to them 9 rings of power. Blinded by their greed, they took them without question, one by one falling into darkness. Now they are slaves to his will. They are the Nazgul. Ringwraiths. Neither living nor dead. At all times they feel the presence of the Ring, drawn to the power of the One. They will *never* stop hunting you.
- Just like Frodo, we have an *adversary*. Something creeping alongside, unseen in the darkness, stalking us. As Martin

Luther put it 500 years ago, an *ancient* foe, who seeks to work us woe

- **And just like the hobbits, Peter has *no idea***
 - v. 33- “Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death!”
 - Jesus’ words about Satan don’t seem to even *register*
 - Not out of hypocrisy. He *honestly* believes it. Because he *loves* Jesus. Oh how he *loves* Jesus!
 - “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow *this* day, until you deny three times that you know me” (v. 34)
- **Illustration-** Gospel Coalition Study
 - About 10 years ago, the Gospel Coalition posted an article discussing a study of fallen pastors. Examined 246 men in full-time ministry who *lost* that ministry due to a morally disqualifying sin
 - They had several things in common. But one of the most striking was this: *without exception, each was convinced that such a fall could never happen to them*
 - Therefore they were in great danger of just that happening
- I wonder if we are aware of the threats we face. Do you *know* what hunts you? Or do you go through your days blissfully unaware of this danger?

- Polling from Gallup as recent as 2023 shows that belief in Satan, that is, a literal, evil spirit who hates God, hates God’s people, and is actively working to thwart the kingdom of God, is at an all-time low in the United States. Including amongst Christians
- **But Jesus clearly thinks Satan is real**
- “Be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pet 5:8)
- “Let he who think he stands take heed lest he fall” (1 Cor 10:12)
- **Satan is going to come after you.** If you *want* to follow the Lord, if you *want* to be used by Him, if you *want* to see Christ’s name proclaimed, and the Gospel go forth, and to grow closer to Him, and for God to be glorified, *he is going to try and stop you*
- Because he hates Jesus. And therefore he would like nothing more than to destroy the people Jesus loves
- **How?? This passage show us**
- v. 31- “Satan demanded to have you, that he might *sift* you like wheat.”
 - This is an **illustration** from agriculture. Sifting was the last step before grinding wheat grain into flour. Basket, basically a big filter, and they would shake and strain. Grain would fall through, while chaff, seeds, pebbles, and the like would remain

- Image is of Satan putting Peter through a sieve, pressing him, so that he comes out but *something is left behind*
- What's Satan trying to take *out* of Peter?
- v. 32- "I have prayed for you that your *faith* may not fail"
- This isn't the only passage that talks about this
 - **1 Pet 5:8**- "Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. **Resist him, firm in your faith,** knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood around the world"
 - **Eph 6:16**- "Take up the *shield of faith*, with which you can extinguish all the darts of the evil one"
- ***Satan is after Peter's faith***
- **This has always been his goal, even back to the first time he appears in Scripture in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3)**
 - He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden'?"
 - The woman said..."We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'
 - The serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it

your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil"

- **Do you see the idea? You can't really trust God. He's holding out on you. He isn't really for you. He's not really good.**
- Satan would love to deceive us into believing that God is against us, and not for us. To undermine His power, wisdom, kindness, and goodness
- That's what Satan does. He attacks our *faith*.
- **HOW?**
 - And he's a pragmatist- he'll use any method to accomplish this, so long as it works.
 - C.S. Lewis- "Murder is no better than cards if cards can do the trick"
 - The Bible shows Satan uses two main tactics.
 - First is **suffering** (1 Pet 5:8, others). Could do a whole sermon on that, but it's not what this passage talks about, so I'm gonna ignore it
- **This passage: v. 34- "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me"**
 - The same man who said, "I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death" would deny Jesus *only hours later*
 - **v. 60-62**- "Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you are talking about.' And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. **And the**

Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter *remembered* the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, ‘Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.’ And he went out and *wept bitterly*.

- **Illustration-** Can you *imagine* what Peter felt in that moment? Can you *imagine* what that look was like? Or the next day, when Jesus had died, knowing that was his *last* interaction with his Lord? Or later, once the euphoria of Jesus’ resurrection had worn off, and this was looming in the back of his mind, no matter how much he tried to ignore it?
- *Surely* he heard a voice
 - How can you belong to the Lord after you’ve done *that*? How can you say you love Jesus?
 - More than that, how can He love **you**? *Look at what you’ve done*. You’ve **rejected Him**, publicly, repeatedly, **in His presence**
- **Satan literally, in Hebrew, means accuser.** Rev 12:10- Satan “accuses us day and night before our God”
- One of Satan’s key tactics is to use *our own actions*, the truths about things *we have done*, to *shatter* our faith. He wants to make you *doubt* that we can be useful, to weigh us down, and ultimately **to make us doubt God’s love for us**
- **Tim Keller-** “Accusation is the **main** problem we face from the forces of darkness, even more than temptation”

- And he’s really good at it!

I said this was one of the most encouraging passages in the Bible. Are you feeling encouraged yet? We’ve seen the sobering reality; thank God there’s a stunning hope. Two incredibly hopeful things in this passage:

Jesus Knows

- v. 32- “when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers”
- **Jesus knew that Peter would blow it!!** And yet He *still went to the Cross anyway!*
- **Quote-** J. C. Ryle- “How well the Lord foreknew the weakness and infirmity of His disciples. He told them *plainly* what they were going to do. And yet...this did not prevent His choosing these twelve disciples to be His apostles. **He allowed them to be His intimate friends and companions, knowing perfectly well what they would one day do**, with a clear foresight of the melancholy weakness and want of faith which they would exhibit at the end of His ministry. *Jesus does not cast off His believing people because of failures and imperfections. He knows what they are. He takes them with all their blemishes and defects, and once joined to him by faith, will never put them away.*”
- It’s not as if Jesus *doesn’t* see our failures, our sins, our imperfections. No, He sees them far more clearly than we would like

- When Peter denied Him that third time, Jesus turned and *looked* at Peter. He *saw*. And that look *undid* Peter.
 - **What did you think the tenor of that look was?**
 - **But that wasn't a look of condemnation; it was one of *compassion*.** As if Jesus was saying, "Peter, I see. And I know. You have *abandoned* me. But I'm not going to abandon you...*I'm going to die for you*. I'm not going to leave you in your sin...*I'm going to save you from it*."
 - THAT is the Savior we have. He is a *merciful, gracious, compassionate* high priest whose glory it is to pass over the transgressions of His people, because He has *covered* their sins with His *own* blood, shed at the Cross
- **Remember: Satan is a liar. He's a lying liar who lies**
 - When he's accusing us, he doesn't **have** to lie about our sins
 - **But he does lie about our God**
 - **Isaiah 55:6-9-** "Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, that He may have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher

than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts"

- In the moments when Satan accuses, when he tries to *shatter* your faith, **there's only one thing that helps**
- **That is to say, "Yes, Satan, *you're right*. I *have* done those things. But my God *knew* this, and He *loves me and died for me nonetheless*."**
- **Jesus will ALWAYS have compassion on His people who have sinned and go to Him in repentance**
- **It is not enough to recognize the truth of this in our heads. We must ACTUALLY go to Jesus and ask Him for grace and to make us clean**
 - Shame and guilt makes you *hide*. It makes you timid. It makes you stop. When Adam and Eve felt the shame of their sin, they *hid* from God
 - **Quote-** John Piper- "The great tragedy is *not* [your failures]. The tragedy is that Satan *uses* the guilt of these failures...[so you] fade away...because of a gnawing sense of unworthiness and guilt."
- If you want a practical take-away from this sermon, something you can put into action, here it is: **Stop hiding your sin. Don't do it.** *Do not* let the shame and guilt you feel from your sin *prevent* you from going to Christ. It doesn't fool God. But it **will** give Satan a way to drag you down. Expose it. Bring it to the Cross. And let it be washed away by the blood of your Savior as you experience His forgiveness.

Jesus Prays

- v. 32- “I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail”
- I’ve often thought *this* is one of the fundamental differences between Peter and Judas
- For those of you who are aware of their stories and how they end, try to focus on only this moment, on the night before Jesus died, when He spoke these words to Peter.
There are so many similarities:
 - Both are apostles. Both have been with Jesus for years. They’ve followed Him, eaten with Him, preached His message, and driven out demons
 - When Jesus said one of his disciples would betray Him (v. 22-23), it wasn’t like the other 11 were like, “Well, must be Judas. *That* makes sense.” No, they all said, “Lord, is it I?”
 - And now Satan has entered into Judas...later in this chapter, he betrays Jesus into the hands of the religious leaders
 - Now Satan has demanded to have Peter...later in this chapter, he denies Jesus three times
- And when Jesus *looks* at Peter, and he walks out and *weeps*, we have *no* expectation at that moment that Peter might recover, *except* these words- “I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail”
- **That is why Peter survived.** Even though he stumbled and fell, his faith *didn’t* fail. And that’s *only* because his

Savior stepped in front of Satan, who *demand*ed Peter, and *prayed* for him

- Zech 3:2- “The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?”
- He said, no Satan, this one is mine. I have set my love upon this person and you cannot, you shall not have him
- **He prays for us too**
 - John 17:20- “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You have sent Me.
 - Heb 7:25- “he is able to *save to the uttermost* those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives *to make intercession for them*”
- **We don’t *only* have a God who hears our prayers; we have a God who *Himself* prays for us!!!**
- What could *possibly* stand against that?
 - Rom 8:33-32- “Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is *God* who justifies. Who is to condemn? Jesus Christ is the One who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who *indeed is interceding for us*”

- **So *take heart*. Jesus is *greater* than our adversary. And, just as He did for Peter, He *prays* for us that *our faith might not fail***

Conclusion

So when you're under attack, when you have hard times, when the guilt of your own sin threatens to crush you, remember these two things: *Jesus knows*, and *Jesus prays*.

I can think of no better way to conclude than with these words from **Hebrews 4:14-16**: “**Since then we have a great high priest who passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us *hold fast* our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may find mercy and help in time of need.**”