

# Luke

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- [ 0 : 00 ] As the Lord should be pleased to help me, I should call your attention to a subject you will find in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 22, and verses 31 and 32.
- And the Lord said, Chapter 22, the Gospel of Luke, and verses 31 and 32.
- Maybe, as you ponder this subject being announced, some of you will wonder if there will be anything in the sermon that will help you or encourage you, because the subject seems to be one that is somewhat unusual.
- I might say, I often wish I could have a subject and preach from it, so that all of you, wherever you are in life's journey, following on to know the Lord, could get some help, some comfort from it.
- But then, the Word of God has to be preached in its comprehensiveness, so that sometimes the Gospel in the proclamation of it is for comforting.
- [ 2 : 02 ] Sometimes it may be for instruction. Sometimes it may be for instruction in righteousness. Sometimes it may be for instruction in righteousness. Sometimes it may be for instruction in righteousness.
- Sometimes it may be to get matters sorted out between you and God, that you should feel as you want to feel, that matters are right between you and God.
- But a subject like this is one that is a little unusual, and I've got to attempt to preach from it, for it is laid on my mind to do so.
- And it may be, although you may not like it when you find it, that you will have to know something about the subject if your religion is that which God is the author of.
- Because every sinner taught of God, journeying on, following on to know the Lord, sooner or later, will have some experience of what it is to be incited and to be riddled therein, and to have all your religion and your profession put to a crucial test as to that which is of the flesh and that which is of the Spirit.
- [ 3 : 28 ] But I want especially this Sabbath morning to look at it, first of all, as it referred to Peter.
- And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as we.
- And now, in approaching the subject, this opens up a very, very solemn consideration.
- And that is that God permits Satan to put to the test in his people that religion which God has been the author of and will maintain.
- Whatever Satan may do, whatever Satan may do, in sifting them regarding their religion and their profession of the name of Jesus.
- [ 4 : 45 ] But, first of all, I want to look at the setting of the subject. And now, there was a real need to be that Peter should go into Satan's sin.
- I say that with great reverence. And there might be quite a need to be, too, that you and I should go into it from time to time. Peter, as you read in the Gospels, was indeed a disciple.

But he was not very deeply taught of God. He had not got a very great understanding of the why and wherefore of the dealings of God with his people.

In some things, he was lamentably ignorant. And yet, he was right at heart.

He was a disciple. He was ordained to be an apostle. But he was not yet, do listen, he was not yet fit to preach the gospel of the grace of God.

[ 6 : 06 ] Later on, that God had ordained that he should do with his fellow apostles. And now, in the context, you read a word like this.

And this is very solemn to consider. And there was also a strife among them. Which of them should be accounted the greatest?

And now think that these disciples had journeyed about with Jesus Christ where he went. And they had heard his words.

They had seen the deeds that he wrought. And often he had engaged in loving conversation with them.

And shown them much tenderness. And yet, they seemed to have so little understanding of what their life work was to be.

[ 7 : 13 ] That in thinking about it, there was a strife among them. Which of them should be accounted the greatest? And I rather feel, I say this with great reverence, That Peter was among the foremost as to whether it was not he that should be the greatest.

And then, earlier on, you read this. And do remember what is the background to all this. Within a few hours, Jesus Christ would be hung on Calvary's cross.

And he was approaching the climax of love's redeeming work. And was soon to go up Calvary's hill. And suffer in the stead of poor sinners like you and me.

And what do you read about his disciples? This is what you read about one. Then entered Satan into Judas, surname Discarrier, being of the number of the twelve.

And he went his way and communed with the chief priests and captains, how we might betray him unto them. And they were glad and covenanted to give him money.

[ 8 : 37 ] And he promised and saw opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude. Satan had gained an advantage there.

And having gained that advantage, it would seem that Satan, being the cruel foe that he is, thought he would do what he could with the other eleven remaining disciples.

And having gained that advantage with Judas Iscariot and such an amazing triumph, it seemed to Satan.

He looks at the other disciples and he sets his eyes upon Peter. And Peter was already in that frame of mind, whereby the Lord had very kindly rebuked them.

Which of them should be accounted the greatest? And now, it is very evident that while Peter was, as I said, a disciple, and he was an apostle called by Jesus Christ, he had got a great work to do, but it needed that he should go deeper down into a knowledge of the things of God.

[ 10 : 03 ] Peter was, the right character to preach the gospel in the spirit of it, and with an appreciation of what the gospel really is, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and sinners of deepest doubt.

Peter little knew what was in his own heart. When the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat.

What does Peter say? And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death. And remember, he really did mean it, but he did not know the depth of his own heart, how sad his state by nature was, and his utter inability to do it, on his own initiative.

And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

And now, that brings us up to the subject. Peter, alas, proved the solemn truth of what the Lord Jesus said, and when he was put to the test, what a poor Peter he was.

[ 11 : 41 ] And you must have no stones in your pocket to fling at Peter. You've only to look in the glass of the gospel, if your eyes are open to see therein, and you will see just a brother or sister to Peter.

And you and I must ever remember, myself I cannot save, myself I cannot keep, but strength in thee I pen would have, whose eyelids never sleep.

when you find that then the Lord Jesus is taken and Peter follows afar off, there he is, and a kitchen maid undoes him altogether.

And his behavior was very ill. He denied with oaths and curses that he knew the man. Very, very solemn.

And now the word of God tells you how often I have quoted this to you, whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort in the scriptures might have hope.

[ 12 : 57 ] The third time that Peter denied the dear Lord Jesus immediately while he yet spake the cop crew.

And there was Peter altogether undone. And from that moment he began to question whether he was a disciple and certainly he would not regard that he was an apostle and that it was his life work to preach the gospel of the grace of God.

But this is the way in which he was to be made a good minister of Jesus Christ. you do not get ministers made by sending them through a curriculum and course at Christ College Oxford or somewhere else like that.

No, it is as they are born again and well instructed in our sad air state by nature is knowing well the malady, the leprosy that lies deep within and then the blessed remedy in the application of it that they can tell poor sinners Jesus' blood through earth and skies mercy, eternal mercy cries.

So dear Peter had to learn later on. but we will look at the subject as grace is given from three viewpoints of it.

[ 14 : 32 ] And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, be full, Satan has desired to have you that he may sit you as wheat. and I want you to remember the illustration of the saviour you, wheat.

There was a great deal of chaff about Peter, so there is about you and I. And we shall be sifted so that the chaff is separated from the wheat and the mercy will be to find there is some wheat left in the sift.

When you are sifted, Satan will attempt and will sift you. If it is the will of God that you should be so trying, he may sift you as wheat.

And now first of all, there are the sifts. And the second viewpoint is the sifting. And the third viewpoint is the sanctification that arises from being sifted, when the Lord in mercy overrules it, and you are instructed thereby.

And like Peter, Peter, when he went into Satan's sift, he was too big a Peter, he was an out-sized Peter. Which of them should be accounted the greatest?

[ 16 : 03 ] Well, Peter thought, I reckon I should be the greatest. No, Peter, no. You are to go into Satan's sift. And when you go in as you are now, the size that you are, you will be much diminished, and you will come out just a very wee Peter.

And you will be just the right-sized Peter, then, to go forth and preach the gospel. Because you will be utterly dependent on your master, for his divine aid, to preach it.

And you cannot preach it to purpose otherwise. It is not just preaching sermons. You could gather up a sermon, and it could be quite correct in doctrine, and proclaim it, and the words would be sound doctrine, and listen in there too.

But that might not be the gospel of the grace of God. No. Who have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

Who recorded that? It was the apostle Peter who recorded that. A very different viewpoint of Peter than we are looking at, at the present time, as he is in Satan's spirit.

[ 17 : 33 ] But he had to go into Satan's spirit to be made what he was afterwards, that he might preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and not just that he was the greatest among the disciples, and number one in the apostles.

disciples, and I might just say this in passing, it needs to be said, when the Lord Jesus went up Calvary's hill, they all forsook him and fled.

Not just Peter in his denying, but the eleven disciples forsook him and fled, and Jesus Christ suffered alone.

Yes. Let us look at these six. Because you will go in one or the other. You might go into all of them before you die.

You have already been in some of them, it may be. There are just three or four I might name. Sivs.

[ 18 : 44 ] You know what a sieve is. And it means that when the wheat is sifted, all that is not desirable to be among it, not only the chaff that has to drop through the sieve and the wheat remains in.

That is the illustration in how God deals with his people in Satan's sieve. What is of God remains in the sieve.

What is not of God drops through the meshes. It is not of God. It is to do with the flesh. All that is to do with the spirit remains in the sieve.

Do remember that. And now there is one sieve. You might say I do not think I shall be sifted in that sieve.

You do not know what may be in the future for you. But if ever you should be in it, you will find it a very great difficulty sieve.

[ 19 : 51 ] And you will need divine aid in the sifting process. And now there is one sieve that some people thought of God are sifted in and that is the sieve of prosperity.

There are very few people who have got grace who can stand a time of prosperity in their lives when the things to do with this life are in abundance around them.

When there are time things lining their nets with every comfort possible and they settling down in it.

Mark the words, settling down, there is an age for Satan's sieve. If you have a time of worldly prosperity according to what you are by nature, it will not be long before in lining your nest with every comfort you can think of and you know you're very prone to do it even though you might not think it is prosperity.

You keep looking round your home and you think you would like this and that and the other. This can go out and something better come in and what is it all to do with comfort for the flesh?

[ 21 : 21 ] Yes. And good thing it would be if you could realise you would be insisted in a sieve of prosperity. peace. The apostle Paul said the love of money is the root of all evil and so it is.

You look in the word of God I dare not take up time over each of these sids to go into too many details but you will see how prosperity coming into people's lives people taught of God it marred them some of them it well nigh undid altogether you can think of Solomon and you can think of someone else and that will be easier for you to follow you can think of when Abraham said to Lot we've got two big dwelling together there are your herds and my herds and your herds men and my herds men and there are too many of us dwelling close together and we be brethren and now you take your choice and go which way you like and I leave it with you and he saw that the land towards the south was well watered and just the place he should like to be in with all his herds and on his own initiative in running his farm what do we read and he pitched his tent towards

Sodom poor Lot what do we read next and Lot dwelt in Sodom prosperity had undone him he hardly realized he was being put to the crucial death but there he was and the upshot of it was that God burnt him out of it yes agur agur in the book of proverbs as a good prayer give me neither poverty nor riches feed me with food convenient for me you can see people while they're in poverty is vile they live near to God and they can speak about the things of God to purpose and profit but they may prosper and go on and on and rise up before the world and then they overlook their poor brethren and when they speak at any time about the things of

God it is not with the same weight and worth that they used to speak but in the sieve of prosperity God would deal with them there is another sieve and that is adversity and now there are people who have been prospered and then something has come into their lives and that which God has given them he has removed it to a great degree and they are brought low and now they come into adversity and that puts them to a test from another viewpoint it is a great thing when you dwell in adversity veil and every day you need to see the hand of God open what shall we eat what shall we drink and where shall we be clothed there is another sieve

I name and that is the sieve of temptation Peter speaks about being in heaviness through manifold temptations in his epistles and you can understand what he felt like when he was in safe and sieve and when he had fallen so solemnly as he did he was in heaviness through the outcome of manifold temptations and he he was just an amazed Peter that he should behave like it he never never dreamed that he would ever do it he did not know the depth of iniquity that is locked up in our own hearts it is a true statement outside our face by nature is our sins how deep they are saying and Satan holds and binds us fast within his slavish chains yes another civ that

[ 26 : 35 ] God uses is affliction everything seems going well in your life you have good health wherewith to attend to your vocation in life and then something comes and you are brought low affliction is laid on you and a physician comes and he gives a very discouraging verdict as to what your affliction is and what the outcome of it will be and now your religion your profession is to be put to the test as to how you will behave before God and man and at first you may react according to what you are by nature and say with Jacob all these things are against me but it will be well if when you should be put to such a test you can do what Peter says in his epistle humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time and leave the issue with

God and seek to enter into that word of the Salmist trust in him at all times ye people pour out your heart before him God is a refuge for us there is just one more sieve I name then I will look at the subject from another viewpoint and now that sieve you may not know much about shall I say this it may be you will be in the more or less immediate future and that is the sieve of persecution the word of God says everyone that will live godly shall suffer persecution maybe some of you dear young people know a little about persecution in your everyday lives where you labour to earn the bread which perisheth and you find it is a sieve it sifts you and you have many searchings of heart because there are those of you who know what is right before god and you know what is the life of the righteous and you know what set the scriptures but it is a testing time and I can only say for your own peace of mind as grace is given let your yea be yea and your nay be nay lest ye fall into temptation yes and be undone in satan's sieve and the lord said simon simon behold satan hath desired to have evil that he may sift you as wheat and now

I want to look at the second viewpoint of what it is in being sifted and remember that he may sift you as wheat there is that which you have got to lose in satan's sift it has got to go through the meshes and matters have got to be made right between you and God that is the outcome of it God permits satan to put you to the test but God will see to it that your religion will stand up to the test but I am bound to say this it might be a great deal smaller in size than it was according to your viewpoint of it before you went into satan's sift you might not have much religion left when you come out of satan's sift but what little you have is the little that a righteous man has which is better than the riches of many wicked and it will avail you while you live and when you come down to die it will not be much more sometimes than

God be merciful to me a sinner or like Ezra oh my God I am ashamed I blush to lift up my face unto thee or it may be you will come to this my soul into thy arms I cast I trust I shall be saved at last and now what is it that you have got to lose in satan's sin what is it that has got to go through the meshes as of nothing worth no value whatever to you or your profession of the name of Jesus all trust in the creature oh you've got to learn that trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not to thine own understanding another thing has got to go through and that is all self confidence oh Peter might have thought he should be the greatest among his brethren but he had got to lose that idea and I can tell you this however long a man has been favored of God to preach the ministry every time he goes up in the pulpit even after fifty years and more he goes up just the same if he goes in the right mind as he went the first time and I can tell you the first time you go up in the pulpit to preach is the time not to be forgotten and you do say

Lord help me and you know if the Lord does not do it there will be nothing worth listening to in your attempt to preach the gospel and you have got to remember that as long as you live a man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven and that thou givest them they gather another thing that has got to go through the mess is our own wisdom so that whatever you do even if you should be a preacher of the gospel you must seek divine aid wisdom from above in making engagements to preach and only go there where God in his mercy ordains you to go as you view it after seeking his divine aid to guide you you are not allowed to use your own wisdom and perhaps make an engagement to go to preach where the congregation is very large and overlook one where there will not be double figures in the congregation no no that kind of thing has to drop through the meshes of the Sieve and you have to go where

[ 34 : 10 ] God ordained you to go and if he says go to Nineveh that great city and preach you have got to go yes whatever you may think about it according to what you are by nature another thing that has to go through the meshes of the Siv is all our own scheming and there is quite a deal of that about us you know when trouble has come into your life you have thought what can we do now well what can you do when all is said and done all you can do good it is if you get grace enough to do it is to remember then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble and he saved them out of their distresses all this has to go through the measures of the Siv our own righteousness yes and I can tell you something else that has to go looking at it now from the viewpoint of

Peter and any man as a preacher of the gospel you've got to let your own reputation go if need be you may have to be as some people think unorthodox where you go to preach well you've got to do that before God and let man think what he likes and remember your master who made himself of no reputation but now and the Lord said Simon Simon behold Satan has desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat but then there was something left in the faith it may not be much it will not be much whatever God has done for you will remain in the seed it will be faith as a grain of mustard seed and remember before this happened in

Peter's life the Saviour said to him whom say ye that I am and Peter said thou art the Christ of God blessed art thou Simon bar Jonas flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee but my father which is in heaven and there was reality in Peter's breast but oh there was a great deal of chaff chaffing and the Lord designed to make manifest that which was chaffed and that which was weak for Peter's good as he went forward later on to do that work he was ordained to do and now there is faith as a grain of mustard seed that is left because even in Satan's sieve when you know not what to do there is only one remedy left for you to avail yourself of the remedy lies before thee cry oh

Lord I am oppressed undertake for me save me save Lord or I perish and here is faith that is still left in Satan's seed and will not go through the message hope is left yes hope in God though it may be in Satan's seed you're only left to hope against hope but it is real God is the author of it and you can still have that feeling who can tell but what God will be gracious unto me and love is left in the seed and here Peter can illustrate that viewpoint of the subject you remember when the Lord Jesus rose from the dead and he questioned Peter Simon son of

Jonas lovest thou me and he put the question three times and he said at last thou knowest all things oh Lord thou knowest that I love thee love was still left but what had brought that about that it should be made manifest as being still in Peter's breast you find this when Peter denied the Lord Jesus the third time and immediately while he yet spake the cock crew and the Lord turned and looked upon Peter and Peter remembered the word of the Lord how he had said unto him before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice and Peter went out and wept italy this this was the proper

[ 39 : 31 ] Peter this was the right size Peter this was the real Peter a contrite Peter a broken hearted Peter and yet you read in the gospel of Mark that when he denied he cursed and swore in doing it and to think of a disciple doing that one with a name on a church roll as it were and to think of one ordained to be an apostle doing it oh it was a vast eye opener for Peter and the effect of it remained with him as long as he lived and you will find that in reading the epistles of Peter 1 and 2 you will find that which he began to learn when he was in Satan and which produced fruit in his lips and life when afterwards he was anointed by the spirit of

God and remember when the blessed day of Pentecost was fully come they were all gathered together and what do we read then up stood Peter and how he was helped to preach the gospel he was just the right size Peter to do it he could tell poor sinners about the grace of God he could speak well of Jesus Christ because after the Lord rose from the dead there was an interview between the Lord and Peter of which the word of God gives us no details but you may depend on it it was a time to be remembered by Peter and he rejoiced in restoring mercy forgiveness of sins so that he could preach the gospel and out of the abundance of the heart the mouth could speak about it you will find after a spell in Satan's is that there is just a little religion left a little faith a little hope a little love a little prayer a little trust in

God a little real experience and why do I speak like that because it is recorded behold Satan has desired to have you that he may sit you as we and there will be we otherwise you would not be in Satan's to have it made manifest that there is the man in the street does not go in Satan's in the same way that God ordained that Peter should be permitted to go into it and get good for his soul thereby we dear friend Lord of harvest grant that we wholesome grain and pure may we yes what remains in Satan's is that which will help you to live aright and at the last to die right and as

I come to the amen there is just another viewpoint here and that is the sanctification of all this but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not and now Jesus Christ is at God's right hand for sinners interceding all the time he is the mediator between God and man if any man sin we have an advocate with the father Jesus Christ the righteous and there is a word in the Selm he shall stand at the right hand of the poor to save him from those that would condemn his soul I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not all that you and I might have an interest in the saviour petition like that founded on write thy prayer avails the father smiles on thee and now thou in thy kingdom art dear lord remember me and what did the saviour tell the apostle peter he must have pondered it in his heart even while he wept bitterly when thou art converted the word converted you will remember means restored when thou art restored strengthen thy brethren and not think you are to be the greatest among them strengthen thy brethren and you find the apostle peter after the day of pentecost when matters had been made right between his soul and

God how bold he was with a right boldness a gracious boldness always said to those when he was commanded with his fellow apostle to speak no more in the name of the Lord he had an answer ready we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard yes and here you find the great distinction there was I say this is great reverence between the apostle Paul and the apostle Peter and now the great mission of the apostle Paul was to go to the Gentiles and to a great degree to break up the fallow ground and lay the foundation and that churches might be formed and built up and now the apostle Peter in his ministry he was more of a nursing father and he was helped so to preach the gospel that he could give gracious instruction and blessed comfort and you will remember what

[ 46 : 15 ] I read to you there you see how he had learned in Satan Siv he had learned his lesson well and what does he say what you would do well to remember beloved think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you with those some strange things happened unto you but rejoicing as much as ye are takers of Christ's suffering that when his glory shall be revealed ye may be glad also with exceeding joy you will remember that when the Saviour spoke about his sufferings that Peter said unto him be that far from the Lord they do not like to hear the talking about suffering and the Saviour rebuked him and said get thee behind me Satan they savourest not the things which be of God but the things which be of man and another word here is a word for you to remember and surely you will believe that when the apostle



Peter put this word down to be read in ages to come he went back to that hour when he was in Satan's sin be sober be vigilant because your adversary the devil has a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour and what does he say here you see the sanctification but the God of all grace who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus after that ye have suffered a while make you perfect establish strengthen settle you to him be glory and dominion forever and ever Amen son