

STRENGTHEN THY BRETHERN

LUKE 22:31-32

Text: Luke 22:32

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³² But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

Introduction:

Peter was to be sifted, so our Lord warned him; and Satan was to operate with the sieve. Satan had an intense desire to destroy Peter- indeed, he would like to destroy all the chosen of God- and therefore he desired to sift him as wheat, in the hope that he would be blown away with the husks and the chaff.

Notice what came before the sifting and went with the sifting.

Note that blessed word "but." "But I have prayed for thee."

Not thy brethren have prayed for thee.

Not thy hast prayed for thyself.

But, "I have prayed for thee."

The master of prayer, who is our advocate, assures us that He has already prayed for us.

What a comfort this is to any who are passing through deep waters!

Notice also what the Lord prayed.

“That thy faith fail not.”

The Lord knows where the real battle takes place.

As long as the Christian’s faith is safe the Christian’s self is safe.

Notice

1. HIS OBLIGATION

He has gone astray, and he has been brought back; what better can he do than to strengthen his brethren?

No doubt Peter caused some to stagger and some to stumble.

No doubt some of them must have been frightened at Peter’s behavior.

That is why no doubt the Lord told Peter when you get right again – “Strengthen Thy Brethern.”

You must try to build up the men you tore down.

Warn them not to imitate your example.

There may be some here today who like Peter your example has caused some to stagger and some to stumble.

The same words the Savior gave Peter are given to you – when you finally get right again – “Strengthen Thy Brethren.”

How can you better express your gratitude to God that by seeking to strengthen the weaker brethren when you have been strengthened yourself?

Notice not only His Duty but also:

2. HIS QUALIFICATION

Peter is the man who when he rededicates himself to the Lord and is restored can strengthen his brethren.

He can strengthen them by telling them of the bitterness of denying his Master – the Lord.

Because of his denial he went out and wept bitterly.

There are sweet tears as well as sad tears, but the weeping sin causes in the child of God are bitter tears.

Its one thing to weep, but quite another to weep bitterly.

An ordinary sinner sins cheaply, but the child of God sins dearly.

Peter, because he could tell of the bitterness of backsliding, was the man to go and speak to anyone who was about to backslide, and say, "Do not so, my brother; for it will cost you dearly."

Peter was the man to tell another of the weakness of the flesh, for he could say to him, "Do not trust yourself.

Do not talk about never going astray.

I used to be lofty in my talk, with a haughty spirit, but it caused me to fall.

I felt so sure that I loved my Lord and Master, that I put great confidence in myself, and didn't think that I would ever wander from and deny him.

I denied Him three times before the cock crew.

Peter was wonderfully qualified, by having known the bitterness of sin, and by feeling the weakness of his own flesh, to go and strengthen others in these important points.

But he was also qualified to witness of the power of the Lord's prayer.

He could never forget what the Lord had said to him, "I have prayed for thee."

He would say to any brother who had grown cold or presumptuous, "the Lord Jesus prayed for me, and it was because of his prayer that I was preserved from going farther, so that I was led back, and delivered from the sieve of the Evil One."

Don't you think that this would strengthen any brother who is weak?

It is wonderful how men and women are helped by those who have had a similar experience.

How one can comfort the bereaved if one has been bereaved himself!

If the Lord has blessed you, and remembered you in his great mercy, and you know the power of the prayer of our Intercessor, you can strengthen your brethren by reminding them of the Savior's love for them.

He would say, "My Lord was very good to me, and was willing to welcome me back.

He did not wait until I came back, but he came after me.

He sent after me, saying; Go tell my disciples and Peter.

Peter could also speak of the joy of restoration.

He would say, “do not wander, there is no good in it.”
There is no profit in it.

But if you have wandered away from God, when you come back the joy of restoration is very joyous.

Notice lastly not only His Obligation and His Qualification but also:

3. HIS BENEDICTION

Strengthening the weaker brethren will result in personal blessing.

It will also serve as a reminder of our own weakness.

All the weaknesses and follies you see in others, believe that they are in yourself, and that will tend to humble you.

What a comfort it must have been to Peter to have such a charge committed to him!

How sure he must have felt that the Lord had forgiven him, and restored him, when the Lord, having asked him, “Lovest thou me?” said to him, “Feed my sheep; feed my lambs.”

Peter is restored again, or else Christ would not trust lambs to him.

Peter must be all right, or else Jesus would not put the sheep under his care.

Whenever any set out to strengthen weak Christians you will get benefit from what you do in this effort.

Suppose you pray with them. Well, then, you will pray a little more than if you only prayed for yourself; and anything that adds to your prayerfulness is a clear gain.

There is a wonderful power in prayer to bless ourselves, besides the blessings that it will bring upon others. Pray with the weak ones, and you will not be a weak one yourself.

If you use your example to strengthen the weak if you carefully say to yourself, “No, I will not do that because, though I may do it, I may do injury to some weak one this will do you good.

If you hesitate, if you draw back from your own rights, and say, “No, I am thinking of the weak ones”- you will get good from that self-denial.

Suppose that in trying to strengthen these weak ones, you begin to quote Scripture to them-quote a promise to them-this will bless you.

Close:

Let’s purpose in our heart not to wander, but if you have then get right with Him, and when the joy of thy salvation is restored once again – strengthen thy brethren.

Peter’s letters was his fulfillment of the Lord’s instruction to strengthen the brethren.

