

Peter the Rock or the Denier

Peter is known for his deep faith and also for his denial of Christ. Two opposing views. When Peter was with Jesus, he said he would never deny Christ and Christ told him he would deny him three times before the cock crowed. As I was thinking about this, I could understand Peter's fear and his denials. But then I thought of the story of Rachel Scott and the Columbine school shooting. The witnesses said that Rachel was asked by the killers if she believed in God. The boys had taunted her previously about her faith. She replied that she believed in God and then the boys shot and killed her. Peter was frightened and was fearful that the followers would also be taken. He would later receive forgiveness and go on to become the very foundation of the faith in Christ. Peter would fulfill Christ's words when Christ said he was the rock on which Christ would build his church. Peter was impetuous and often said things without really thinking it out, but he loved Christ. He was the first to realize who Christ really was when Jesus asked the Disciples what people were saying about him, and after receiving their reports Christ asked the question, "Who do you say I am?" It was Simon Peter who answered correctly, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God." Peter would go on after the resurrection to tell everyone he could about the crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. He would nurture and lead a multitude to faith in God and his Son Jesus Christ and then he would die upside down on a cross because he did not feel worthy enough to die in the same way Christ had died. Peter had done what so many have done. He denied Christ but then realized that Christ was the way to salvation, his deliverer, and followed him to the end of his days on earth. Peter fulfilled what Jesus saw in him and became the rock on which Jesus would reach others. If only we could all become what God saw in us when we were formed in our Mother's womb, and he loved us before we knew him. God used Peter to show us commitment and forgiveness and how they can both be used by God. Peter died for what he believed in and delivered that message with his life and death. Rachel Scott died affirming and believing in her faith and witnessing to that faith in God.

John 21:15-19 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes Lord," Peter said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs" again Jesus said, "Simon, son of John, do you truly love me?" Peter answered, "Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me!" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" Peter said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep, I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

Lord, forgive us for those times we have turned from you, for those times we did not listen to your voice. Forgive us for our lack of faith when adversity came, for those times when we put our needs and desires before you, grant us your peace and may we obey your words. We ask that you be with those suffering from illness, grant them your healing power, be with those who grieve from loss of loved ones from death or memory loss or illness or separation. Be with our church Lord, may we be your church welcoming the strangers, the lost and the searchers. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry as he leads us closer to your word. Be with his family and all the families in our midst. Be with those who are separated from loved ones and those that are alone. Be with our staff and leaders, guide them and protect them. May we bless you and each other with our prayers and service. It is in your name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson

