



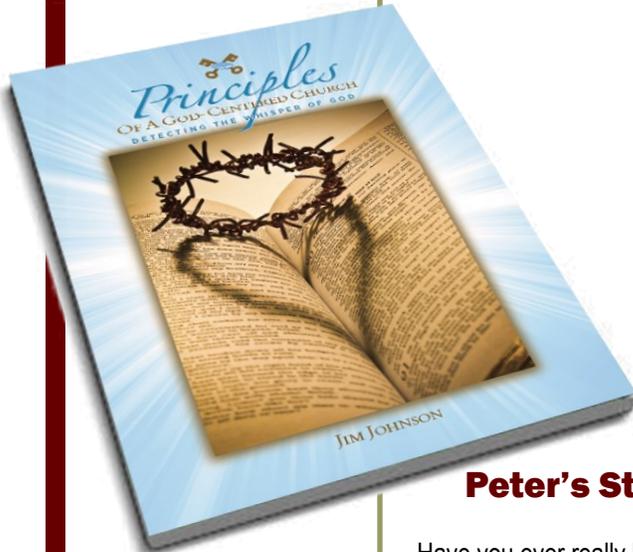
Justapreacher Ministries

Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. - 2 Timothy 4:2

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Principles of a God-Centered Church

We are so excited to announce that Jim's book, ***Principles of a God-Centered Church*** is available for purchase. We are asking for a \$5 donation per copy. Many thanks to Chris Wilson, who has recently revamped our entire website. It looks amazing! To check it out or to order a book, go to:

www.justapreacherministries.org

In addition to this, as part of a special promotion for the book, Jim will be preaching at our home church, First Baptist Church of Merritt Island, on Sunday morning December 8, 2013, and books will be for sale after the service. Jim will even sign a copy if you like.

Peter's Story

Have you ever really looked at Luke 22:31-32 and Acts 3:11-21 together? Grab your Bibles if you can, because I want to show you something that recently became clearer to me than ever before. (I will be using the English Standard Version).

We most likely know the Luke passage pretty well. It is where Jesus tells Peter that Satan wants to sift him as wheat. But have you ever looked closely at what Jesus actually says? He tells Peter that He has already prayed for him, and what He prayed was that Peter's faith may not fail. (He prayed that Peter wouldn't quit after denying Jesus). And then Jesus adds another statement to what He is saying to Peter. He adds, "And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."

Keeping what Jesus said to Peter in mind, let's look at Acts 3:11-21. In this passage, Peter

is preaching to large crowd of Jews who have gathered after he and John were used of God to heal a man. Peter uses some words in his message that take on a whole lot more meaning when you know Peter's story. Remember, he **denied** Jesus three times, but **Jesus knew ahead of time that he would**, and Peter **turned back** to Jesus and received His forgiveness. In verses 13 and 14 Peter points out that the Jews had **denied** Jesus, the Holy and Righteous One. In verses 17 and 18, he tells them that they acted in ignorance, but **Jesus knew they would**. The prophets had already foretold it. And in verse 19, Peter then encourages them to **turn back** so that their sins may be blotted out.

Peter is not only preaching truth, he is preaching from his own life experience! His message was not a presentation that he had memorized in order to share with people, he was preaching from what Jesus had done in his own life.

When Jesus told Peter about his coming denial, He also told him about what God wanted to do through him after he had walked through that journey. The same goes for each of us. God has a plan to use each of us for His purposes and His glory. We see past failures as disqualifications, but God sees them as something He can use if we don't quit and we return to Jesus. The choice is up to you. Are you going to listen to our enemy who is trying to convince you that you are worthless? Or are you going to listen to Jesus who is pursuing you in love, just like He did to Peter after rising from the dead?

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 tells us that we can comfort others with the comfort that we have received from God. In other words, "When you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." Peter still is.

Thank you!

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