

## **Jesus is trying to make Peter aware that salvation is personal Peter is learning what it means to know, love and follow Jesus**

Jesus is not preparing to save the world en masse in a sort of superman act, swooping down and lifting the world up on one arm. No. Jesus rescue mission is much harder than that. It's personal. His sacrifice, suffering and death is a 'once and for all' act, so it could be thought of as 'supermanesque' but because He did it for each of us on a 1:1 basis it is an ongoing and eternal act of salvation. It's complicated.

This is the evening that Peter begins to realise this. He was feeling comfortable, valued and even proud of his special relationship with Jesus. He didn't need to have his feet washed....he was already with Jesus ...he was ok. Jesus knew different of course. 'Peter, unless you accept for yourself, my personal invitation and gift, you will be left out of all that I have come to achieve for you.' Peter didn't really get it but he reluctantly agreed to go along with Jesus and had his feet washed.

Jesus knew that Peter would falter and fail. He knew he would turn his back on him, deny even knowing him. So much for their special relationship and Peter's special commitment. No-one is strong enough to stand alone in the face of fear and evil except Jesus. Peter had no chance on his own. Unless of course he could claim the promise that Jesus had given him. 'I am going to make a personal commitment to you....I will die to save you from yourself....I will rise again to give you a new beginning, to show you God's loving mercy and forgiveness....I will restore your broken relationship with me.....just make your personal commitment to me.'

Peter was soon going to come face to face his own wretchedness. He would realise the darkness and vulnerability of being completely on his own. But somewhere in the depth of his despair he remembered what Jesus had said and done. *Jesus had washed his feet*. This act was ingrained in Peter's mind. Jesus had promised Peter that he would be one with him. Somehow, Peter found the strength to face his utter anguish and desolation at his failure to acknowledge his friend and master. Peter remained faithful to his promise to follow Jesus, watching from the shadows throughout Jesus' whole ordeal. This was mind numbingly, nail bitingly, stomach churningly personal. But how could Peter find a way forward. How could the past be reconciled? How could he now show Jesus how much he loved him? It was all hopeless in Peter's eyes. He just watched. He could hardly pray.

Peter would, of course, discover God's personal commitment of love for him through Jesus; Peter would make a personal commitment of love to Jesus. This would be the reconciliation that Peter longed for – on a beach over a bbq breakfast of fish and bread. Peter would know for himself that there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God – not even our own inability to see it or accept it.

So, as this is personal, when Jesus comes to 'wash our feet', will we say -

'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?'

Will we deny him?

Will we follow blinded by our tears?

Will we accept Jesus invitation to sit and eat with him so that we can hear him say to us - 'Do you love me?'

