

Midweek Lent 2 Sermon  
“Ignore the Warning” (Luke 22:31-34)  
February 21, 2024  
Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for this day is Luke 22:31-34.

**“31 And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.”**  
**33 But he said to Him, “Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.”**  
**34 Then He said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.”**

So far the text...

I like the sound of a rooster crowing. It's peaceful to me. It reminds me that God's in charge of the new day that is about to begin and He has this little messenger crowing to announce it. Yes, God takes care of all the animals, the birds of the air and the ones that walk around crowing their hearts out. Most of all God takes care of the crown of His creation, His people. As the rooster crows, the Lord reminds us in our hearts, **“This is the day the Lord has made, let us be glad and rejoice in it.” Psalm 118:24**

Why should we rejoice at the rooster's crowing? Because, as the Psalm says, **“The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.”**

Jesus allowed sinful men to arrest Him, cause Him suffering and kill Him. As we will hear in Sunday's Gospel reading from Mark 8, Jesus predicted this to His disciples. **“the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.”**

Yes, the builders would reject Him. But Jesus would become the Chief Cornerstone by defeating the devil on the cross and rising again three days later. This was the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes!

When Peter heard Jesus tell them of this, he was quick to rebuke Jesus! **““Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!” (Matthew 16:22)** Jesus answer? **“Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”**

The things of God... salvation for the world...the forgiveness of sins through the Son of Man's death on the cross...the only way to achieve salvation. Forgiveness for Peter's sin of being secure in himself and his denying of Jesus...forgiveness for placing our confidence in ourselves instead of trusting God.

So, Psalm 118 reminds us:

**“It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.**

**It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.” (Psalm 118:8-9)**

Peter's impetuous nature and overconfidence in self would soon get him into trouble. Yes, the rooster's crowing can be comforting to the ear, but for Peter it was a serious warning. After the Passover meal as the disciples walked with Him to the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus warned Peter. He would deny Jesus three times before he heard it crow. Nah, Peter replied...

**“Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.”**

**1 Corinthians 10:12** warns us...**“Therefore let him who thinks he stands (stands by one's own power, that is) take heed lest he fall.”**

Have you heard any peculiar warnings lately? A study was done on Quaker Oats and Cheerios that found the chemical Chlormequat Chloride a chemical that is used to decrease the stem size of the oats to make it easier to harvest. Animal studies have shown chlormequat can damage the reproductive system and disrupt fetal growth. Is this a warning that deserves more heeding by the consumer?

What other kinds of warnings do you receive? How about the stoplight turning yellow and warning you to slow down? The other day, the city of Elsa had the warning to boil water. A few weeks ago, we were warned of the coming cold front by the weatherman and many people covered up their plants with blankets. Today, Raymondville ISD warned that there was a local shooter who not apprehended yet and there would be extra vigilance at keeping the schools secure. In a Florida school, a warning went out about a measles outbreak. What does your doctor warn you to do or not to do?

What's the purpose of a warning? To say “I told you so?” or is there genuine concern for another person's welfare, love for one's neighbor? Maybe the warning is to prevent something bad from happening? Is there some teaching that goes along with the warning to help prepare for future perils.

Yes, there are warnings for our physical well-being. How do we get them? Well, now adays, you can watch a YouTube “fail” video and see all the accidents that people get into. They're usually not too serious so they're good for a few laughs. But mainly, God gives us the gift of parents and other representatives (good teachers, doctors, nurses, policemen etc. ) to guide us, watch out for us and warn us.

Not only does God watch out for physical well-being, but more importantly He watches out for our spiritual well-being. Christian parents bring up their children in the Word of God. And the Lord gives His people Christian teachers, leaders, and of course pastors, deaconesses, elders and many others.

What does our catechism say at the close of the commandments?

He says thus (Exod. 20:5f): **“I the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.”**

A warning but also a promise of mercy.

Luther’s explanation:

*God threatens to punish all that transgress these commandments. Therefore we should dread His wrath and not act contrary to these commandments. But He promises grace and every blessing to all that keep these commandments. Therefore we should also love and trust in Him, and gladly do [zealously and diligently order our whole life] according to His commandments.*

What happens if God’s warning is not heeded? Punishment. Sadness. Despair. Shortly, before warning Peter, Jesus gave this warning.

**“But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!” (Luke 22:21-22)**

As Pastor Goetz told us last week, Judas Iscariot loved “stuff” more than God and betrayed Him for 30 pieces of silver. In much despair, he then took his own life. He not only betrayed Jesus, but rejected the forgiveness that Jesus won for all people on the cross.

Peter, did not heed the Lord’s warning. God allowed him to be sifted by Satan. Servants recognized him as he stood warming himself at the fire outside Caiphas’ home. And Peter denied Jesus three times.

**“And a servant girl came to him, saying, “You also were with Jesus of Galilee.”**

**70 But he denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you are saying.”**

**71 And when he had gone out to the gateway, another girl saw him and said to those who were there, “This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth.”**

**72 But again he denied with an oath, “I do not know the Man!”**

**73 And a little later those who stood by came up and said to Peter, “Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you.”**

**74 Then he began to curse and swear, saying, “I do not know the Man!”**

**Immediately a rooster crowed. 75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus who had said to him, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” So he went out and wept bitterly.” (Matthew 26:69-75)**

How quickly Peter lied and cursed and denied the Lord that he had confessed “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God” . What despair. What sadness we know when we also by our actions deny that Jesus is our Lord. How often does the rooster crow in our hearts?

There is an LCMS church in Basehor Kansas, “Risen Savior Lutheran” that has done something very interesting on its church steeple. There’s a rooster facing east as a reminder to not deny Jesus, Christ Crucified and risen.

God is merciful to all of us, to Peter and all of us sinners. Jesus promised Peter that He would pray for him.

**“But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.” Luke 22:32**

And when Jesus rose from the dead, He sought out Peter privately, first of all before He appeared to the other disciples to assure him of His love and forgiveness. By My stripes you are healed. When the Emmaus disciples came running back to Jerusalem to tell the others that they had seen the risen Jesus, the disciples said to them, **“The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” (Luke 24:34)**

And as the Lord promised Peter, he would strengthen others after his faith was strengthened. He would feed Jesus’ sheep and lambs. **“Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.”**

Jesus won for the world forgiveness of all our sins. For all the times we failed to heed His commandments, His warnings. He did not heed Peter’s warning to not go to the cross for that is man’s thinking. And only by God’s gracious plan, amazing plan, “foolish plan to sinful men” was the world saved once and for all.

Jesus was tempted often to deny Himself and come down from the cross. Thanks be to God He didn’t, but did the Father’s will perfectly in our stead. So, the rooster can crow not only as a warning to not deny Jesus ever, but also to rejoice as we begin each new day - that this is the day He has made and we will be glad in it. Amen

**“And this peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**