

The Look of Love

Luke 22:54-62 [A sermon from the eyes of Jesus]

I've been the recipient of "the look," but not "the look" of our text.

When my Mom would catch me getting into the "cookie jar" she would give me a look that would scare Jack Bauer. When I was in the fourth grade I got the same look from Mrs. Sias who caught me shooting spit-wads at my classmates.

But, there are other explanations for "the look"—A "look" that says, "I love you." Jesus gave this "look" of love to a rich young ruler who came inquiring what else was needed on his spiritual résumé to acquire eternal life (Mk. 10:21— *"Jesus beholding him loved him..."*).

Today I want us to consider the look Jesus gave to Peter after Peter had just denied Him three times outside the courtyard of the high priest. I believe that "look" was etched in his memory the rest of his life.

I. The CONTEXT of "the Look." The scene.

- After Jesus was arrested in the garden, Peter followed "*afar off*" (v. 54) to the high priest's house. He was not as close to the Lord as he thought he was.
 - Peter mingled with others outside who had gathered around a fire to stay warm. There he denied knowing Christ (vs. 55-59).
- A. **The setting**— Jesus was at the upper end of the hall of Caiaphas. Enough distance separated Jesus from Peter that neither the words of Peter could be heard, nor could a look of Christ from one end of it to the other could have been established. The look of Jesus to Peter came as Jesus was being down the hall out through the porch, past the fire, on His way to stand before the Sanhedrin. As Jesus passed by where Peter was standing at the fire, *"the Lord turned and looked upon Peter."*
- B. **The turning**—"*Turned*" involved a turning of Christ's head toward Peter with his eyes fixed on Peter. It was no casual glance—It was an intentional look.

- C. **The eye contact** was established for only a brief moment as Jesus passed by, but it must have seemed like an eternity to Peter. As far as Peter was concerned, in that intimate moment, it was just him and Jesus.

II. **The COMMUNICATION of “the Look.”** The saying.

➤ **What did Peter see in the eyes of Jesus? What did those eyes say to him?**

- A. What the “look” did NOT say—**Condemnation**. Peter sinned. He failed to keep to his word. He betrayed Jesus. But this was not a look of anger that said, “Peter, how could you deny Me! I thought you were My friend! Didn’t you say you would die with Me!” Are these the eyes that met Peter’s eyes?

B. What it DID say.

1. The “look” spoke of **Christ's knowledge**— It is unlikely Christ audibly heard Peter’s denial due to the distance between them and the loud questioning and arguments of the priests. But He knew of Peter’s denial none-the-less. He predicted it.

➤ As Jesus looked at Peter, that “look” said, “Peter, I heard you—your denials and cursings... I heard them all.”

- a) No wonder, only a few days later, Peter boldly said, “*Lord! Thou knowest all things.*”

➤ John 2:25—“*He needed not that any man should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.*” As He said to Nathaniel, “*When thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee.*”

- b) The Lord still looks upon each of us, moment by moment, as we go about our day, and often when our behavior denies Him.

2. It spoke of **Christ's hurt**. Peter did not realize he was hurting Jesus by his denials—He was only thinking of saving himself. Then when his eyes meet the compassion in the eyes of Jesus, he realized, “I have stabbed Him in heart with another pain. I have joined with His tormentors.”

➡ How often we also hurt the Lord Jesus? If we please Him when we obey Him, it must also be true we cause Him pain when our conduct denies Him through unbelief... selfishness... and sinful deeds. How often do we grieve His Spirit, *“whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption?”*

3. It spoke of **Christ's love**. Jesus is bound, He is accused, He's been smitten, but His thought is not for Himself, but of backsliding Peter. There was no flash of anger. Jesus turned to Peter in unconditional love.
 - a) It was a love when repelled, it returns again... When sinned against, it forgives... When denied, it perseveres. It *“hopeth all things... beareth all things... endureth all things.”*
 - b) God receives no pleasure in bashing sinners—*“As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live”* (Ezek. 33:11). Sin brings it's own punishment. It is not God's desire to punish sin. It is His joy to cure it.

III. The CONSEQUENCES of “the Look.” The success.

➡ The sequence of events show it was Christ's “look” that broke Peter's heart—**And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord... And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.**”

- When words fall on deaf ears, just a “look” from Jesus will do the job. Someone may hear a sermon and leave unchanged... People may read a book filled with powerful exhortations, and put it back on the shelf and forgot it... A person may suffer a great loss, like the death of a loved one, and still remain backslidden.
- But Christ's look of love can do what all the sermons cannot do... what the most eloquent author cannot do with hundreds of pages... what suffering cannot do with it's sorest pain.

A. The REMEMBRANCE— *“And Peter remembered...”*

1. ...Jesus' prediction of his denial and the cock crowing.
 2. ...his vow that he would never deny Jesus.
 3. ...how he said he would die for Christ.
 4. ...that Jesus said He would pray for him and use him again.
- B. The REALIZATION—Peter did not think Jesus knew about his denial. But when Christ looked upon him, he realized the ugliness of his denials.
1. Sin lies saying you will not get caught. Sin dulls our consciences. Nothing will reveal the true character of our actions as the realization that nothing we do escapes His sight.
 2. Ask yourself, “Would I do this if Jesus stood here beside me and saw it?” Peter could deny Christ when He was at the far end of the hall. He could not have denied Him if Jesus had been at his side.
- C. The REMOVAL—The look of Christ **severed** Peter from the crowd. He removed himself from the fellowship of those around the fire. We need to separate ourselves from the fellowship of world.
- D. The REMORSE—There is nothing that brings “godly sorrow,” like the look of Christ's love. You may hammer at a man's heart with the law and he may admit his guilt. But, no man will ever have lasting victory over his sin as long as he only intellectually admits it. Unless one catches a glimpse of the love of Christ, there will be no remorse—And if there is no remorse there will be no permanent victory.
- E. The REPENTANCE—
1. Judas “*repented himself*” and “*went out and hanged himself.*” Peter “*went out and wept bitterly.*” What made the difference in their repentance? Because Judas saw his sin in the light of an defiled conscience. Peter saw his sin in the loving look of a forgiving Lord.
 2. That is how we should to see our sins—In that look of love from Christ as He bore our sins upon Himself on the Cross

saying, *“Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.”*

SUMMATION: This morning, let us make eye-contact with the eyes of our heart with Christ’s look of love. May it change our lives as it did Peter.

What does His “look” say to you?

- I know you... and what you did.
- Although it causes me pain, I still love you.
- Return to Me and I will use you.