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# Words of Truth

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## Peter Didn't Give Up

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In the article that was published last week, we addressed how someone shouldn't give up if that person has fallen away and been withdrawn from. In my years of teaching I have observed a [not THE problem, but one of many] problem that often keeps people from returning to the Lord and the congregation that has disciplined them. That problem is hurt feelings. Some get offended when corrected or even feel rejected because they do not understand that faithful brethren are properly motivated when they have to take such actions. Correction is an act of true love (Proverbs 3:12, Proverbs 27:5-6, and Revelation 3:19).

For our brief study in this article, let's take the time to consider the harsh rebukes Peter faced and how he turned that into his salvation rather than his damnation. Notice how Peter did not become contentious (debate, argue his cause, etc.). Peter did not remind those correcting him what he originally gave up to follow Jesus (Luke 5:1-11). Peter took the sharp rebukes. Peter used those sharp rebukes to his betterment.

### Peter Was Rebuked Sharply

Peter was rebuked sharply when his faith wasn't strong: *“And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, **O thou of little faith**, wherefore didst thou doubt”* (Matthew 14:22-31)?

Peter was rebuked sharply for asking a question about something Jesus taught: *“Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding”* (Matthew 15:15-16)?

Peter was very sharply rebuked, right after his confession was established as the rock the church was to be built upon (Matthew 16:13-18): *“From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men”* (Matthew 16:21-23).

Peter was told by Jesus that he wasn't yet converted and that he would deny the Lord (which he did and wept bitterly after realizing Jesus was right - Luke 22:54-62): *“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me”* (Luke 22:31-34).

Peter was rebuked for not wanting Jesus to wash his feet: *“After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head”* (John 13:5-9).

Jesus wasn't the only one to rebuke Peter: *“But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews”* (Galatians 2:11-14)?

### **Conclusion**

The above is not a complete list of the times Peter was rebuked. However, it shows a pattern. Peter needed corrected multiple times. Sometimes those rebukes were harsh. Yet, he didn't quit. He learned. He later was not only an Apostle, but also became an elder in the congregation in Babylon (I Peter 5:1-4). That says a lot (I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9)! Learn from Peter. Don't let correction be your downfall (Proverbs 10:17)!