

MAGNOLIA MINDS: After 2020, a renewed sense of seeking the Lord

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The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoke to him... And he went outside and wept bitterly. Luke 22:61-62 (NIV)

When he got outside, Peter crouched down with his elbows on his knees and put his head in his hands. His tears gushed forth as a torrent. He tried to catch his breath. He had never cried so deeply. The tears, and snot, and slobber seemed to pour out of his eyes, his nose, and his mouth... all three combined into a watery mess.

That's when a servant girl approached and asked, "Why are you crying?" He recognized her from the courtyard of the house of the high priest. She was the one who earlier that evening had disclosed his association with Jesus as they sat around the fire.

He just didn't have the emotional strength to lie to her again, so he admitted that he was one of Jesus' disciples and then began to explain his grief. "I'm crying because I have denied my Lord on more than one occasion tonight. I have

egotistically declared that I was stronger than I really am.

“I have disappointed Him, myself, and the men that have looked up to me as a spiritual leader for the last three years. If only He had never turned and looked at me. The disappointment in his eyes made me feel as if He was sorry that He had ever called me to assist Him in His mission from God.”

After hearing his explanation, she walked away laughing that anyone could get so upset about wanting to remain anonymous. As he watched her walk away, he muttered under his breath, “I hope that He can forgive me.”

I wrote that creative narrative of Peter’s denial to challenge the members of our church during the 40 days of Lent. In 35 years of pastoral ministry, I have never participated in Lent nor led my church to participate in Lent.. until this year.

I felt that after the craziness of 2020, that all of us needed a renewed sense of seeking the Lord. I felt that we needed to seek revival in our own hearts so we could pray for revival in our communities, state, and nation.

Personally, I wanted to fast, pray, confess my sins, and acknowledge before God that I have disappointed Him at times and so have His people. As a spiritual leader, I knew that if my heart wasn’t changed, then how could I lead my flock in spiritual renewal?

We know that Jesus sought out Peter after His resurrection and forgave him. He will also do the same for us!

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14 NIV)

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