

Why Peter Was Restored but Judas Was Not

Then a servant girl saw him as he sat near the fire, and gazed at him, and said, "This man was with Him." But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." Peter said, "Man, I am not!" About an hour later another man firmly declared, "Certainly, this man also was with Him, for he is a Galilean." Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying." Immediately, while he was yet speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." And Peter went outside and wept bitterly (Luke 22:56-62).

One of the most challenging things in life is learning to read people. We've all had people who completely surprised us. In Jesus' life, there were people constantly seeking to get closer to Him and enjoy a more intimate relationship with Him. Jesus was not paranoid, trusting no one. Neither was He naive, trusting everyone.

Instead, Jesus was wise and discerning. His wise discernment was possible by the Holy Spirit who knew everything about everyone. For this reason, even though Judas and Peter failed, Jesus restored Peter to friendship and ministry but sent Judas away. Thanks to the Holy Spirit, Jesus knew what was in each man's heart and knew whom to walk with and whom to walk away from.

The difference between Judas and Peter is the difference between covert and overt. Judas was covert. His sinful scheming and plotting were secretive, hidden and deceptive.

For the entirety of his three years with Jesus, he stole money and plotted against Jesus.

Outwardly one would never know this. He hid who he really was from everyone except Jesus, who alone knew his heart. Lots of people are like Judas—they can steal money from their bosses, cheat on their spouses, use church membership solely as a means to appear pious in public, and have no heart for the Lord. Covert people are incredibly difficult to have a relationship with because you never know them, and they only use you.

Peter, however, was overt. He could not keep his mouth shut, and as a result, you always knew what he was thinking, feeling and doing. He would boss Jesus around, grab a sword and cut someone's ear off and seemed utterly incapable of hiding his inner life.

Some people are like Peter. They want to get it all out, put all their cards on the table and just tell you up front who they are, what they think and what they are doing. Overt people can be blindsided by covert people. They simply cannot understand how someone could lie, hide, cheat, steal and conceal their true identity throughout life. Covert people often take advantage of overt people, since overt people assume they agree unless they say otherwise and have no idea there is a problem unless something is said. {eo}

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