**“The King’s Passion: Regret or Repentance?”**

**Matt. 26:69-27:10; John 21:15-19**

**(Notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 9/14/25)**

As Jesus was arrested and put on trial by wicked men, two of His closest disciples failed Him. What sets Peter and Judas apart is not so much the magnitude of their failures, but what they did with their sin when guilt overwhelmed their hearts. While Judas felt remorse for the result of his betrayal of Jesus, he tried to deal with the guilt himself and took his own life. Peter, on the other hand, stayed near to Jesus, received his Master’s full forgiveness, and was graciously restored to usefulness to the Lord. Judas tried to ease his conscience and died in despair. Peter repented and was restored. Now in the presence of Christ, Peter will serve Him and enjoy Him eternally.

Without repentance there is no salvation (2 Cor. 7:10). Repentance is not feeling really sorry or really ashamed. Repentance is not trying to make things right on your own. Repentance is taking our sins to the One who died for our sins, believing He is merciful, and receiving His forgiveness. With a changed heart (enabled by God), we turn from that sin toward the newness of life that is ours in Christ Jesus. Judas tried to solve his sin by himself. Peter took his sin to Jesus.

When Jesus was arrested the disciples scattered. But Peter followed at a distance, trying to go unnoticed when the going got tough. He was loyal at heart, but weak and afraid. (Q3) Three big denials… blowing it big time. Luke provides the heart-breaking detail in Luke 22:61: Jesus’ gaze met Peter’s gaze. It wasn’t scorn. No, Jesus affirmed that He had not forgotten His weak disciple. And Peter wept bitterly.

Jesus had earlier promised that Peter would fail, but not permanently. Jesus also promised to pray for his wayward friend, that he would be restored (Luke 22:32). This poignant passage was included to encourage the rest of us when we, too, are weak.

Peter’s tears reflect the godly sorrow that leads to repentance. When Christ promised to never let him go, Peter believed it. Jesus keeps His promise to hold fast to His weak disciples. That’s us, folks.

Judas experienced deep sorrow. He felt the weight of his circumstances. But his sorrow had to do with the mess he was in. Peter’s sorrow was knowing that he had sinned against God Himself. Sinners cannot save themselves, no matter how sorry they are (Matt. 1:21). It’s not a question of scoring enough “good” points or going to church enough. MAN CANNOT SAVE HIIMSELF! Judas felt remorse, but he was desperately trying to manage his sin himself, trying to ease his conscience. Will God save you as long as you feel bad enough? No. Will He save you as long as you do something to cover up the bad? No. What God wants is a broken and contrite heart (Ps. 51:16-17). The remedy is to run straight to Christ, trusting in His mercy.

Judas is sorry that things didn’t turn out the way he thought they would. He didn’t realize his sin was a sin against God (Ps. 51:1-4). Judas’s remorse was a regret that focused on himself. That’s only sin-management, not repentance. (Q4) Real repentance is a change of heart that leads to a change in life direction. Incredibly, Jesus forgives us when we confess and repent (1 John 1:9).

John 21:15-19 records Peter’s restoration. Why did Jesus ask three times when He already knew the answer? It was Peter who needed to be reminded of how much he loved Jesus! So, Peter repented and turned and followed Jesus.

Regret tries to manage sin. Regret is temporary. Repentance is a God-enabled turning of the heart to Christ’s mercy. Repentance focuses on God, not self. Repentance focuses on God’s remedy, His Son Jesus. Repentance leads to forgiveness, restoration, and renewed obedience. Repentance means that we turn from sin toward the newness of life that is ours in Christ.

**QUESTIONS**:

1. How is Peter’s weeping bitterly different from Judas’ despair?
2. How does the cross of Jesus transform a sinner’s sorrow into hope?
3. Loyal, but weak and afraid. Does this sound like you and me? What can be done about it?
4. Sin management is trying to make yourself feel better. What are some other common forms of sin management in our society?
5. Read 2 Cor. 7:10. How does the “sorrow of the world” bring about death?

**“Nothing but the Blood of Jesus” (Lowry)**

1. What can wash away my sin?  
   Nothing but the blood of Jesus;  
   What can make me whole again?  
   Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
   * **Refrain:  
     Oh! precious is the flow  
     That makes me white as snow;  
     No other fount I know,  
     Nothing but the blood of Jesus.**
2. For my pardon, this I see,  
   Nothing but the blood of Jesus;  
   For my cleansing this my plea,  
   Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
3. Nothing can for sin atone,  
   Nothing but the blood of Jesus;  
   Naught of good that I have done,  
   Nothing but the blood of Jesus.
4. This is all my hope and peace,  
   Nothing but the blood of Jesus;  
   This is all my righteousness,  
   Nothing but the blood of Jesus.