PETER: NEW BEGINNING
THE BEGINNING OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Acts 2:14, 41

PETER: by far NOT the most educated or successful of the apostles!

A normal guy…blue collar
Worked hard to provide for his family
Apparently dreamed of something more
His personality made him useful to God
His weaknesses nearly destroyed him
Jesus saved him
Similar to many of us

THE GOOD STUFF:

Peter's beginning...

Galilee of the Gentiles...he spoke Greek, perhaps Latin, and his native Aramaic

His accent was distinctive and disdained...Mt. 26:73… The entire region of Galilee was seen by "good Jews" as the "armpit of Israel," (Jn. 1:46). He was married (Mk. 1:30) and his home was in the village of Capernaum...where Jesus lived as an adult (Mt. 4:13).

He made his living fishing (think of crude versions of today's shrimp boats.)

Apparently a disciple of John the Baptist…Jn. 1:35-42(**spiritual hunger**)

His calling by Jesus...upon meeting him, Jesus gave Simon the nickname of Peter (rock)... it stuck. Jesus called him and the others to be "fishers of men" (Lk. 5:1-11). In the lists of the 12 apostles Peter is always named first. We assume this is due to his natural aggressiveness and leadership ability.

The Inner Circle...Peter, James, and John (the "Sons of Thunder") were given special access to and special responsibilities with Jesus...the healing of Jairus' daughter, the transfiguration, and Jesus' agony in the garden.

Peter's insight...At Caesarea Philippi Peter said, ***"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,"*** (Mt. 16:16).

PETER STUCK WITH JESUS WHEN OTHERS LEFT
PETER RECOGNIZED JESUS WAS THE CHRIST
DEFENDED JESUS WITH A SWORD

HOWEVER.....**Satan targeted Peter for destruction:**

Lk. 22:31-34...Jesus said Peter would be "**sifted as wheat**"

Mt. 26:33f...Boasting

Then he was sternly rebuked by Jesus when he tried to discourage Jesus from his upcoming suffering and death (Mt. 16:23). Peter stoutly denied he would betray Jesus, slept in the garden while Jesus sweated blood, cut off the ear of the high priest, then fled with the rest of the apostles, three times denied he knew Jesus, wept bitterly, and watched the crucifixion from a distance.

Jn. 20:19...Hid from the authorities

Jn. 21:3...Returned to fishing for a living

SATAN'S PLOT WORKED

BUT GOD HAD A DIFFERENT PLAN...When Jesus said Peter would be sifted…Jesus also said He would pray for him.

Peter's insight...At Caesarea Philippi Peter said, ***"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,"*** (Mt. 16:16).

A NEW BEGINNING FOR PETER:

Peter was restored by Jesus at the sea shore. **God refused to give up on him.**
He was in the upper room.
He was the one who preached on Pentecost...**3000 saved!**
God used Peter to "certify" that He wanted Gentiles in the fellowship of Christianity.
Peter helped lead the Jerusalem council (Acts 15)

SUMMARY:
Satan has his plots....but God uses Satan's plots and turns them into our good and His Glory!!

WE ARE NOT JUST TALKING ABOUT PETER....WE'RE TALKING ABOUT ***US !***

Satan targets **US** for destruction!
Jesus is praying for us right now!!! Heb. 7:25… he ever liveth to make intercession for us.
Rom. 8:34… Jesus is at the right hand of God-- interceding for us.

YOU AND I MUST BE **CONSCIOUS, INTENTIONAL, SERIOUS** PARTNERS WITH GOD.

WE NEED: URGENCY....INTENSITY....HOT PURSUIT

PSM. 63:1…*"I SEEK YOU WITH EVERY FIBER OF MY BEING.*
MY SOUL LONGS FOR YOU.
I ACHE FOR YOUR PRESENCE."

1TIM. 6:11…PURSUE (**to run swiftly in order to catch**) RIGHTEOUSNESS

MAT. 5:6…HUNGER …(**to crave ardently, to seek with eager desire, to *suffer* hunger**)
AND THIRST…(**to painfully feel thirst)**