

Luke 22:31-32

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren."

I remember for a long time I would read this and think that Jesus' prayer was not answered and that Peter had lost his faith. But as I studied it more, and through the Holy Spirit's guidance, I have come to find out that that is not true at all.

True, Peter denied Jesus, but he never lost faith in Jesus. He just lost faith in himself. Whereas Judas Iscariot did lose faith in Jesus, because he hung himself, losing all faith and hope in Jesus as his Savior, because he went to the priest for forgiveness (by returning the money to them) instead of going to Jesus for forgiveness.

† ***Matthew 27:3-4 Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!"*** (Underlined for emphasis)

You see, if Peter had lost faith, he would probably have killed himself as well, but he didn't. Once Peter truly realized his sin, we read that his heart was broken, but he still had faith in Jesus.

† ***Luke 22:61-62 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "**Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.**"*** ***So Peter went out and wept bitterly.*** (Underlined for emphasis)

I don't know about you, but I have committed some pretty bad sins as a Christian in my past that I wondered at the time if the Lord had really forgiven me? I would think that that it was just way to bad, how could He? But I knew He did, and it's just how we feel when we fall into sin. Just like a child when they do wrong. Deep down they know their parents still love them, but they also know that what they did was wrong.

But did you catch Jesus' words to Peter? Words that were saying in a sense, Hey Peter, I know you will deny me, but you will not lose faith in Me and I will not stop loving you, or love you any less.

† ***and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.***

Jesus knew that Peter would deny Him, but He also knew that Peter would return to Him as well. When you read that, you should say WOW and realize that the Lord has not stopped loving you

and you have not lost your salvation because of that sin, or sins you may have done in the past or recently, or even that sin that you are struggling with. You are really forgiven and still loved by the Lord. He was not shocked or surprised when you did it, He knew you would. And just like He knew that Peter would come back to Him, He also knew that you would to!

Also, think of King David, who not only committed adultery, but murder the husband of the woman he committed adultery with, and the Lord still forgave King David.

† **2 Samuel 12:13** *So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.*

So Jesus will also forgive you if you confess your sin to Him.

Now, one more thing is that, even though we are forgiven, there are times when we still have to pay the consequences of what we have done. Take King David for example. Look at the first word of verse 14 of 2 Samuel 12

† **2 Samuel 12:14** *However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die.*
(Underlined for emphasis)

“**However**” That is there because the Lord is telling King David of the consequences that he would have to face because of his sin. Yes King David was forgiven, but he still had to face consequences because of the sins that he committed.

So you may be facing the consequences of what you have done, it doesn't mean that the Lord has not forgiven you or that He loves you any less, just like it didn't with King David. It just shows you why sin is so bad.

Say you murder someone, then turn to the Lord and never murder anyone ever again, it doesn't mean you won't go to prison or even face the death penalty. The Lord would still love you and forgive you, it's just that prison time is a consequence of the sin of murder.

So, whether you have to face the consequence for your sin or not, the real thing to focus on is, if you have confessed it to the Lord, He has forgiven you and His love has not changed towards you at all!

† **Isaiah 54:8** (NLT2) *In a burst of anger I turned my face away for a little while. But with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD, your Redeemer.*

† **Jeremiah 31:3** *The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.*