

Friday, April 10 ~ The Rock Had a Rocky Start ~ John 13:36-38

Jesus' time with His disciples was coming to a close as the events of Holy Week culminated. For some time, He'd tried to prepare them for what was going to happen, but it was more than they were able to understand. Peter, one of those closest to Jesus, wanted some answers. As Jesus told the group that He would soon be leaving, Peter wanted to know where He was going and why he couldn't come as well. With great bluster, Peter declared that he would lay down his life for Him. Jesus told him that actually, before the rooster crows, he would disown Him three different times.

That's exactly what happened. In a matter of a few hours, Peter went from being ready to do anything for Jesus to hiding and pretending he'd never known Him. As he heard that third rooster crow, he knew what Jesus had told him had been true.

But... that's not the end of the story. Peter stumbled that night, but he rose up. Peter had previously proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah (Matt. 16:16). After His resurrection, Jesus encouraged Peter to fulfill his calling to nurture those who believed in Him (John 21:15-17). With time and the Holy Spirit (see Acts 4), Peter became a faithful disciple and leader who helped lay the foundation of the church upon which our Christian roots stand today.

Peter got it wrong, but then ... he got it right. Peter didn't let his rocky start become his defining moment. Instead he learned, and grew, and became the rock he was intended to be.

The same is true for us. It's forgiveness - grace and mercy - that give us the gift of another try. Can we learn and move forward from our mistakes and failures, or are they the end of our stories?

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John 13:36-38 New International Version (NIV)

³⁶ Simon Peter asked him, "Lord, where are you going?"

Jesus replied, "Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later."

³⁷ Peter asked, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."

³⁸ Then Jesus answered, "Will you really lay down your life for me? Very truly I tell you, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times!