

Connecting Minds

"These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31)

The Gospel of John

Chapter 18:7-11

"Then He asked them again, 'Who are you seeking?' And they said 'Jesus of Nazareth.' Jesus answered, 'I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way' that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, 'Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.' Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. So Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?'

"Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none..." Here we see many offices of Christ being exercised. The first one we see is His office as our Mediator. Jesus mediates with the soldiers - "I will go instead of these... let them go..." In this way He is also our substitute and our representative. The second office is that of Interceder. Hebrews 7:25 – "Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them..." Christ intercedes for His people that we are not lost - it is His strength. Third, Jesus is our Protector – "For I know Whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day..." (2 Timothy 1:12).

Peter then draws out a sword and cuts off the right ear of Malchus, a servant of the High Priest. Presumably he probably meant to do more harm than cutting off the right ear. Peter was a better fisherman than a soldier. However, Jesus is not pleased with this. Such action by Peter is against the plans of God. It is against the resolution that Christ has made to fulfill the purpose of His coming.

"Shall I not drink the cup...?" Peter's action was carried out with courage and zeal for his Lord, attempting to do something he is obviously not good at, but it was in fact just another temptation that the devil put in front of Jesus. It was another attempt to persuade Jesus to give up the mission that

He had come to complete. It could be seen as another "Get behind Me Satan" moment. Peter, who's heart is in the right place, has his actions contrary to God's. John Calvin referring later to Peter's denial of Christ three times says "It was exceedingly thoughtless in Peter to try to prove his faith by the sword, while he could not do so by his tongue."¹

"Shall I not drink the cup *which My Father has given Me...?*" Again, we see the connectedness between the Father and the Son in the work of redemption. The Father gives the cup to drink to His eternally beloved Son. But oh, what a cup! This cup is filled with the wrath and fury of an almighty God for the sins of the Elect. Even this cup, this horrible cup, is not despised by the Son who shuns away from an escape – "Shall I not drink the cup...?" "Peter, will you stop Me from drinking the cup that to Me is sorrow, suffering and shame but to you is salvation? Peter, would you desire Me to disobey My Father who has given Me this cup? Peter, dare you prevent Me from the joy that lays ahead through taking this cup and defeating sin, triumphing over Satan and leading a train of captives free?"

Peter's problem was that he hadn't been truly hearing the teaching of Christ and when a pivotal moment arose he acts according to the flesh and not the Spirit. We always must direct our zeal by the truths of Christ or we could be found to be working against Christ.

TableTalk

Passion and knowledge must be kept in symmetrical balance. Peter had more passion than knowledge before Jesus' resurrection. Read Acts 2:14-24. How do we see this balance after the Holy Spirit arrived at Pentecost?

¹Calvin's New Testament Commentaries, vol. 5: John 11-21, John Calvin, pg. 156