

Simon Peter

This is written as a Eucharist but could just as easily be adapted to use as a reflection to go with one of the many NT readings about Simon Peter. One of the things I love about the character of Simon Peter is that he is fiery, impetuous and frequently puts his foot in it. He makes mistakes, denies Jesus and yet is loved and forgiven and charged with leading the disciples and spreading the Good News. Maybe there is hope for us all yet!

Impetuous
Simon Peter
leaves his nets
goes off on a whim
gives up a solid career
follows an itinerant storyteller
travels where the wind takes him
from village to village
from town to town
dining in people's homes
sleeping under the stars
meeting crowds and angry mobs
lepers and sinners
Jews and Samaritans.

Who do you say I am?
And impetuous
Simon Peter
declares
You are the Christ
never one to doubt
totally committed
taught gently through stories
that turn deepest assumptions
on their head
taught gently through practical actions
through ministering to ordinary folk
taught gently through relationship
with the one he left everything to follow.

You're not washing my feet
And impetuous
Simon Peter
puts his foot in it
After three footsore years
he still hasn't grasped
who Jesus is
who Jesus wants him to be
Then not my feet,
but my whole body, Peter declares
Jesus takes a loaf of bread
breaks it and says:
This is my body
broken for you.

Not me, I'll never forsake you
And impetuous
Simon Peter
watches smugly
as Jesus dips the bread in the wine
and hands it to Judas
Simon Peter retains all his brashness
his bristling over confidence
This is the blood of the new covenant
a new relationship with God and each other.
Before the cock crows Peter,
you will deny me three times
I am not, I am not, I am not
A cock crows and the old covenant hangs in tatters.

Simon, son of John
do you love me?
You know that I love you.
Simon, son of John
do you love me?
You know that I love you.
Simon, son of John
do you love me?
You know that I love you.
Then take, eat
feed my sheep
For this is my body,
this is my blood
Do this in remembrance of me.

[share bread and wine]

Impetuous
Simon Peter
stands before the High Priest
The stone that was rejected
has become the cornerstone
a quiet confidence
head no longer bowed
practicing what the teacher had taught
healing with compassion
speaking out against injustice
the penny has dropped
Peter addresses the court
and Peter, the rock, shares the good news
of God's inclusive love.

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