



Links Players

Bottom of the Cup or Barrel?

*Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise Him again—
my Savior and my God! (Psalm 42:11)*

We probably have all seen someone in it, and we have all likely been there ourselves. Where? The bottom of the barrel.

A dark time in our life when we feel like we're at the end of our rope, our backs are against the wall, there's no tomorrow, we are plugged deep in the bunker, or our life feels like it is hanging by a thread.

And the most vivid golf description of hopelessness, thanks to a Scottish caddy..., "Oh laddie, your ball is so far OB you could wrap it in bacon, and Lassie couldn't find it."

Aren't you thankful that God hasn't given up on you? I would have given up on myself, but thankfully, not God. He came to seek and save the lost.

It's good to get our golf ball to hit the bottom of the cup in as few strokes as possible; it's another thing to feel as if your life has hit bottom and you feel all alone, isolated, and hopeless.

One of Jesus' close friends, a disciple named Peter, must have felt like he was at the bottom of the barrel of life after being denied knowing Jesus not once or twice, but three times!

When he heard the rooster crow in Mark 14:72, "he (Peter) broke down and wept." It must have been a dark place for Peter. All his hopes were in Jesus to be everything that would kick the Romans' backside and set up a new kingdom immediately. And now the one he hoped in has been arrested, and things look hopeless.

The arrest and crucifixion of Jesus weren't in Peter's plan or his understanding. After he denied knowing Jesus, he must have felt so alone in shame, guilt, and emptiness. Insurmountable despair, with little to no chance of getting out of the dark place, he found himself after hitting bottom.

Think about the emotions Peter must have had after his denial when he got a glimpse of Jesus. "He wept bitterly." As the story continued, he didn't stay at the bottom.

Jesus himself appeared again to Peter after His resurrection, grilled some fish by the shore, and helped him regain his focus as a disciple by telling him to "feed His sheep." Only eternity will tell the net effect of how many have come to know, trust, and love Jesus because Peter didn't stay at the bottom.

You may be reading this and find yourself in a dark place, or maybe someone's name came to your mind, and you know that person is at the bottom of their barrel. Is the Spirit asking you to reach out and lift them?

If you feel alone, abandoned, hurt, betrayed, or empty and need hope, why not surrender today and let Jesus lift you up? He might even use some of your friends to be His hands of mercy.

Prayer: Jesus, thank you for lifting me out of the pit; help me be your hands and feet to someone who's in a dark place.

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The Links Daily Devotional appears Monday-Friday at linksplayers.com.