

Connect timeless truths with today's news.

ONE PLAYER'S SECOND CHANCE

The stories coming out of the World Cup tournament held in the US continue to transfix hearts and minds across the world. One dramatic story involves circumstances both on and off the field. Gonzalo Plata, a winger for Ecuador, grew up so poor that his family could not afford a soccer ball (he practiced with a ball made of paper as a child). Plata proved himself to be an excellent player, but early in his professional career, he faced harsh disciplinary measures after crashing his car while intoxicated. Through hard work and rehabilitation, he earned a spot on the national team this year, and on day fifteen of the tournament, he managed to stab the ball past the goaltender to score an unlikely point—sending Ecuador into the knockout stage. Instead of facing elimination, the team advanced, all thanks to a player who was given a second chance.

ONE DISCIPLE'S RESTORATION

Peter was destined to be a great leader of the early church, but he started as a humble fisherman. Jesus chooses Peter as one of his disciples, and Peter correctly identifies Jesus as the Messiah. Later, Jesus warns Peter of a coming temptation, and the night when Judas betrays Jesus, Peter loses his nerve. Three times he affirmatively denies knowing Jesus. But in the days and weeks following the resurrection, Jesus goes out of his way to restore Peter. While Peter and the other disciples fish, Jesus appears on the shore. The disciples share an unexpected breakfast with Jesus, who proceeds to question Peter. Three times, Peter affirms that he loves Jesus, and Jesus reminds him to look out for the good of others, as a shepherd.

1. Does everyone deserve a second chance? What about a third or a fourth?
2. What did Jesus know about Peter when he chose him to be a disciple?
3. Why did Jesus make a point of restoring Peter after the resurrection?

Additional Resources

Any videos or web materials are for your personal use. If you play any media files in class, be sure to have the necessary rights to do so.

Playlists

[Contemporary Worship Weekly](#)
[Echoes Worship Weekly](#) (featuring African-American music artists)
[Traditional Worship Weekly](#)

Study Resources

Commentary: [C. Clifton Black's "Commentary on Mark 8:27-38"](#)
Devotion: [Theology of Work on "Peter Disowns Jesus"](#)
Commentary: [René Such Schreiner's "Commentary on John 21:1-19"](#)