

**Luke 22:31–32** Heavenly Living: Being Sifted

When Satan asked to ‘**sift**’ Peter, his purpose was not to get rid of what was undesirable in order to keep the best. His purpose was to shake Peter’s faith so that nothing was left. God allowed the sifting, but He had a different purpose in mind. And that made all the difference with respect to Peter’s circumstances, facing defeat but realizing victory.

**Luke 22:31: “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat....”**

- **Grammatical Usage:** “**demanded**” or in the Greek, “exētēsato” meaning, “totally hand over”; “you” or “**hymas**” meaning, “all of you”; “**sift**” or “siniasai” meaning, “shake, agitate, separate.”
- **Literal Interpretation:** Simon, Simon, look out. Satan wants you all totally handed over to violently agitate and separate like wheat....
- **Contextual/Comparison:** God keeps His Word: God continually uses His Word.

I. The ESSENTIAL FACTS involved in the occurrence.

- It was an hour full of trial and danger for all the disciples
- Peter especially was in danger
- Christ prayed, for them all; Peter particularly and personally
- The specific point in his spiritual condition to which the prayer was directed, was the preservation of his “faith”
- Christ also advised him of all the facts in the case--of the greatness of the peril, the source of it, and the duty of the moment

II. The PRACTICAL TRUTHS it teaches for all time.

- Christ really interposes to save His people when in peril
- He intercedes for particular persons
- Christ’s intercessions go into effect only through the moral or spiritual state of the disciple
- Faith is the special element of the Christian’s security
- Christ’s prayers, as well as His design and desire, as to each one, look beyond the individual to others. “Strengthen thy brethren”
- Christ’s intercessions are not in vain, but take effect even when they seem to fail

III. What it is to be SIFTED

- Questions about sifting can lead us to a deeper understanding of the way God conforms us into the persons He created us to be
- God has a purpose in sifting saints or in allowing us to be sifted. What is most obvious is this: God uses sifted people. There is nothing random about it
- To wrestle continuously with “unanswerable questions” about the economy of God is to falsely assume that God intended for us to know all things or is obligated to tell us.
- He allows us to be sifted in order to bring honor and glory to Himself.
- God allows us to be sifted to grow us: adversity is a bridge to a deeper relationship with God.
- Sifted saints understand the value of the process that takes them from the heights of their self-sufficiency to the awareness of God’s firm hand in conforming them to His image (**Romans 8:29**).
- God’s sifting is tailor made, including:
  - Physical sifting. During physical suffering, He brings to the surface your priorities. You may have great plans, but if the doctor’s report isn’t a good one, your plans totally change and your priorities take on a whole new meaning.
  - Financial sifting. During financial sifting, what you trust in as your security surfaces.
  - Temptation sifting. During temptation, your dependence on Him—or the lack thereof—rises to the top.
  - Vocational sifting. During this sifting, your identity is on the line. Is it anchored to a job or Christ? Do you want God’s will or yours?

#### IV. PREPERATION FOR SERVICE

This Peter is the man who, when he is brought back again, can minister Christ as never before:

- He can strengthen people by telling them of the bitterness of denying his Master.
- Peter was the man to tell another of the weakness of the flesh, for he could say to him, “Do not trust yourself.”
- Peter was also qualified to bear his personal witness to the power of his Lord’s prayer. He could never forget that Jesus had said to him, “**I have prayed for you.**”
- Peter testify about the love of Jesus to poor wanderers
- Peter could fully know and describe the joy of restoration

**Luke 22** is a vivid portrait of spiritual trial under divine supervision. Though Satan’s sieve is real and violent, Christ’s intercession ensures that only chaff is lost, leaving purified wheat fit for Kingdom service.

➤ **Conclusion:** Will I trust God in the midst of being sifted?