

Searching for new levels of trust following a betrayal

The image we have used for our commentary on 9th February '26 seems to relate directly to that conversation between Jesus and his disciple Peter on the beach by the Sea of Galilee, during the weeks after the resurrection. Peter had been warned by Jesus that he (Peter) would deny him (Jesus) three times during the night before the crucifixion; and, sure enough, this is exactly what happened:



'Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. And when some there had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him." But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said. A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." "Man, I am not!" Peter replied. About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean." Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about!" Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly'. [Luke 22:54-62]

In order to establish the confidence that Jesus could have in Peter going forward, he challenged him – also three times – in order to gain Peter's assurance, and this enabled his trust to be restored:

'When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"' [John 21:15-19]

A rather quicker process than that set out in the 9th February '26 episode of The Hypnotist, 'Searching for new levels of trust following a betrayal', but none the less effective for the rest of St. Peter's life.