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Greetings, CBC Family & Friends,

“Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?” (Matthew 26:52-54).

Every time I read that passage, there is a part of me that cannot blame Peter for his behavior. The one they left everything to follow was under attack. Peter's friend was being betrayed and falsely accused in his face. He felt it was his duty to protect Jesus. And if any of us are honest, it is a good feeling knowing that we have people who will fight for us if need be. So, Peter decided to fight. The sword came out of its sheath and off came a guard's ear. Then comes the rebuke.

From the time Jesus is arrested in the garden to the time Jesus requests his presence after the resurrection, Peter is on a rollercoaster ride of failure and redemption. But when we meet Peter again—after the resurrection and after Pentecost—we see a different Peter. As he writes the epistle that bears his name, he does not write about walking on water, the Transfiguration, or even the empty tomb; he chose to write as a humble leader to humble exiles.

It is interesting to read what Peter wrote to others about dealing with opposition and how he handled it in the garden. He instructs the early Christians to “Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people” (1 Peter 2:13-15).

Peter is one of the results of the life, death, burial and resurrection. Jesus came that we might become better so that we can do better. Of course, we know Jesus came to save us from our sins. But the transformation that happens on the inside ought to show up on the outside. Peter retired his sword and took up his cross... we are called to do the same.

Rather than a sword, what we need is a cross. When we choose the cross over the sword, we can actually “put to silence the ignorance of foolish people” (1 Peter 2:15). So put your sword up and pick up your cross.

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