

# Our Father's Do-Over System

Rick Railston

Recorded on January 1, 2022

Many of you have heard of the Mexican-American actor named Anthony Quinn. Especially those of you who were born before 1970. He was born in 1915 and died in 2001. He was a very famous actor, acting in movies such as Zorba the Greek, The Guns of Navarone, Lawrence of Arabia, The Old Man in the Sea, The Hunchback of Notre Dame and always portrayed a rough, earthy character. He was a big guy, about 6-foot 1-inch, big gravelly voice. A few years ago, I watched an interview with him and part way into the interview, the interviewer asked Anthony Quinn if he had any regrets in his life. All of a sudden it was like a switch was thrown; he had been smiling and relaxed and all of a sudden, his face just changed and became contorted and you could see anguish on his face. He basically had a tortured appearance on his face. He looked into the camera and said, my life is full of regrets. He didn't go into specifics and the interviewer didn't ask him specifics, but it was obvious he spent much time dwelling in the past and regretted things he had said or done. He was absolutely sincere; you could tell that.

Over the years, in God's church I've found many people who spend a lot of time and energy living in the past. Living with regrets about past sins, living with turmoil about what they have said or what they have done in the past. Some even get to the point where they get so stuck in the past, so filled with regrets, that they can't move forward. They can't get beyond it or get past it. In some cases, it goes so far as they are hardly able to function in their present world. Of course, our Father knows that and being a merciful Father, He has provided us with a way out of that, a way out of this debilitating syndrome of not getting over our past, not getting over regrets that we have. That leads us to our title today:

## Our Father's Do-Over System

We will have five points today. "Do over" is not a biblical term of course, it's more of a modern term. It's the opportunity to do things over and that's what we're going to talk about. We're going to begin today by looking at the life of Paul to illustrate this concept; this very important spiritual concept of a "do over". Our Father gave Paul the opportunity to prove that he would not repeat his past sins. Our Father put Paul in a situation where he could either repeat the past sins or overcome the past sins. Our Father put him in a position of having a "do over". Let's see how God Almighty did that in the life of Paul.

In looking at Paul's life, the first point we want to make is:

### **1. Paul began his life as a Jew's Jew; a defender of the faith.**

That was his mission. He felt that was his calling. Let's go to Acts 23:1. We step into the middle of where Paul is speaking before the Sanhedrin. I'm going to read this out of the New International Version.

**Acts 23:1** *Paul looked straight at the Sanhedrin and said, "My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day." (NIV)*

Moving to verse 6.

*6) Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, "My brothers, I am a Pharisee, descended from Pharisees. I stand on trial because of the hope of the resurrection of the dead." (NIV)*

Paul is bringing out, and we're being told too, that he comes from a Pharisaical tradition. His Father was a Pharisee and he was a Pharisee. In the previous chapter, in Acts 22:1 Paul is in Jerusalem under Roman guard. He is addressing the Jews who want to kill him and the guards are protecting him at this point. He is addressing those who want to take his life.

**Acts 22:1** *Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you.*

*2) (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,) (KJV)*

They had more respect for him because he was speaking Hebrew.

*3) I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city [meaning Jerusalem] at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. (KJV)*

So, he is a Pharisee of Pharisees, he grew up a Pharisee and was taught by a Pharisee named Gamaliel. Who is Gamaliel? Let's go to Acts 5:29. We're breaking into an account where Peter and the apostles were called before the Sanhedrin because they were preaching in the temple. The reason they were preaching in the temple is, the night before they had been miraculously released from prison by an angel. They were in prison because they had been preaching at the temple. So, they had gone right back to preaching in the temple. Now they were called before the Sanhedrin. This out of the NIV.

**Acts 5:29** *Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings!"*

*30) The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead ... (NIV)*

This is an aside but I can't help but mention that if the God of our Fathers raised Jesus from the dead, then who can the God of our fathers be other than God Almighty. It's so plain and simple and yet people get all twisted around about that.

*30 continued) ... —whom you killed by hanging him on a cross.*

*31) God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins.*

*32) We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.”*

*33) When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death.  
(NIV)*

If we can't confront them, let's just kill them all—that will solve all the problems.

*34) But a Pharisee named Gamaliel [this same Pharisee who trained Paul], a teacher of the law, who was honored by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while.*

*35) Then he addressed the Sanhedrin: “Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men.*

*36) Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing.*

*37) After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered.*

*38) Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail.*

*39) But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.” (KJV)*

This was Gamaliel's advice.

Clark's Commentary regarding verse 34 when Gamaliel is introduced and mentioned as a doctor of the law, says this:

*He was president of the counsel after the death of his father, Rabban Simeon, though probably no favor of Christianity, yet for a Pharisee he seems to have possessed a more liberal mind than most of his brethren. The following advice was at once humane, sensible, candid and enlightened.*

So, this is the kind of man who trained Paul to be a Pharisee of Pharisees. Paul was trained to be among the first order of the Pharisees. So that's our first point; Paul was trained from a young man to be a Jew's Jew. A Pharisee of the Pharisees.

The second point we want to make in talking about the life of Paul and a “do over” is:

## **2. In his zeal, Paul became a chief persecutor of Christians.**

Acts is full of examples of that. In Acts 9:1 we see how Paul was a leader in the persecution, in their view, this breakaway sect from Judaism. Notice the extent to which Paul went.

**Acts 9:1** *Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest  
2) and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus ... (NKJV)*

Keep that thought in mind, that he received letters from the high priest to go to the synagogues in Damascus, because that's an important fact we'll come back to in a minute.

*2 continued) ... so that if he found any who were of the Way [the way of God Almighty], whether men or women [didn't make any different to Paul], he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. (NKJV)*

Obviously, there was a purpose to bring them bound to Jerusalem. Why do it unless there was something more sinister beyond that as far as these people's fate? Now let's go to Acts 22. We read the first three verses earlier about Paul speaking to the Jews who were trying to do away with him. We'll begin in verse 4.

**Acts 22:4** *I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women ... (NKJV)*

Can you imagine? Breaking up families, tearing parents from children, fathers from children, mothers from children, husbands from wives and vice versa.

*5) as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished. (NKJV)*

Verse 17.

*17) Now it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I was in a trance  
18) And saw Him [referring to Jesus Christ] saying to me, Make haste, and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning me.  
19) So I said, Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You. (NKJV)*

He had people imprisoned, tortured and beaten.

*20) And when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him. (NKJV)*

This tells us the involvement that Paul had in persecuting Christians unto death. Now look at Acts 26; here Paul is speaking to King Herod Agrippa II. He was the king of Judea and the great grandson of Herod the Great. This out of the NIV. Paul is speaking before King Herod Agrippa II.

**Acts 26:9** *"I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. (NIV)*

He is saying. "That was my mission, that was my goal."

*10) And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests, I put many of the Lord's people in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them.*

*11) Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. (NIV)*

Let's stop and analyze that sentence for a minute. How would you force somebody to blaspheme? You would do it by torture. You would torture them and torture them and torture them, until they denied Jesus Christ and they denied the Father.

*11 continued) ... I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities. (NIV)*

Talk about a zealot. Now let's go to 1 Timothy 1 and see what Paul writes to Timothy about this situation. 1 Timothy 1:12 and again this is out of the NIV.

**1 Timothy 1:12** *I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. (NIV)*

Notice this, in verse 13.

*13) Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor [notice this, we don't often think of Paul in these terms] and a violent man [my self-admission—Paul says he was a violent man], I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.*

*14) The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.*

*15) Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. (NIV)*

We can understand why he said that if he put Christians to death and tortured them and tried to get them to blaspheme.

*16) But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. (NIV)*

In his zeal, Paul attempted to destroy the very church of God. Yet, as an example to all of us, God Almighty called him and Christ, as he just said, showed him mercy as an example to us. If he can receive mercy, so can we. If he can receive forgiveness, so can we.

That leads to the third point. After all of this, after Paul's training and then his persecution of Christians, the third point is:

### **3. The Father called Paul to preach the truth to those he persecuted.**

Our Father called Paul to preach the very truth to those that he had previously persecuted. Christ sent this man who wreaked havoc on the church of God, back to those very people that he sinned against and gave Paul the opportunity—we would say today—for a “do over”. To make amends. To, as much as possible, undo some of the damage that he had done. Let's go back to Acts 9, we were there earlier in the first two verses and we're going to pick it up in verse 3. Luke is recounting Paul's conversion because it's important to establish this milestone in Paul's life where he was a chief persecutor of Christians and now all of a sudden, everything changes.

*Acts 9:3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:*

*4) And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecute thou me? (KJV)*

Can you imagine his astonishment when that happened? Why do you persecute me?

*5) And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutes: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. (KJV)*

It would be like today, if we walked out and had many rose bushes in our yard, if I just kicked my shoes and socks off and started kicking a rose bush. That was what Paul was doing and pretty soon you're in pain and bloody. Christ is saying, you're going about this the wrong way and it's causing you and others a great deal of pain.

*6) And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? (KJV)*

This shows a willingness on Paul's part. He says, “What do you want me to do? How can I undo this? Where do we go from here?”, Paul is asking.

*6 continued) ... And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. [In his obedience and willingness to submit]*

*7) And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.*

*8) And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. (KJV)*

He couldn't see or it was very blurry.

*9) And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. (KJV)*

It switches to another individual, verse 10.

*10) And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.*

*11) And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,*

*12) And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. (KJV)*

So Ananias receives this instruction but notice what he says.

*13) Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man [Paul], how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:*

*14) And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. (KJV)*

He is a chief persecutor to those who call on You.

*15) But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: (KJV)*

The very people Paul persecuted.

*16) For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. (KJV)*

We are going to see that our sins have consequences, our sins have scars and they don't go away when we repent. He's going to suffer for My name's sake.

*17) And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.*

*18) And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. (KJV)*

Probably baptized by Ananias who was an Elder. He was baptized and received the Holy Spirit. Verse 19 is out of the NIV.

*19) and after taking some food, he regained his strength. Saul in Damascus and Jerusalem Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus.*

*20) At once he began to preach in the synagogues ... (NIV)*

The synagogues in Damascus from where he had letters from the High Priest, to go and put those that attended those same synagogues in prison and haul them back to Jerusalem. Now he's going back to these same synagogues in Damascus.

*20 continued) ... that Jesus is the Son of God.*

*21) All those who heard him were astonished and asked, "Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?"*

*22) Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah.*

*23) After many days had gone by, there was a conspiracy among the Jews to kill him ... (NIV)*

This is the irony of ironies because Paul is now the recipient of those wanting to kill him, just as he wanted to kill them previously. All of this occurs in the synagogues of Damascus. Paul is now being sent to face those whom he persecuted.

As we know, upon repentance, our Father does not eliminate the consequences of what we've previously done—our sins—but he forces us, over time, to face those consequences and the reason he does so, is to press upon us the evil of sin. If we sinned with impunity and never had to face the consequences of our sin, how could we learn? If we sin and have to face the consequences of those sins, it impresses upon us the utter evil of sin.

Now let's go to Acts 13:1. We're seeing again that Paul was being sent, being commissioned to go back to the very people that he persecuted.

**Acts 13:1** *Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.*

*2) As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.*

*3) And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.*

*4) So, they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.*

*5) And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister. (KJV)*



In fulfilling his calling, as we summarize this point, Paul had to face those he persecuted. He had to face the relatives and the families of those he had put to death or those he had imprisoned. Some of the relatives that might still be in prison because of Paul and preaching to them who are sitting in the audience who were there at the synagogues while their dad or husband is in prison, because of this very man who is speaking to them. Can you imagine the atmosphere in the synagogues when Paul walked in and started to speak to them, the very people that he had resulted in killing some of their family members or imprisoning them or persecuting them. Like all humans—like all of us—Paul had to face the consequences of his deeds. He was commissioned to that and went willingly but it was not an easy task, as we can imagine.

What is the eternal principle behind all of this? Let's look and see that in Numbers 32. Facing the consequences of our sins is a principle that goes all the way back to the beginning. We're breaking into the account of Israel marching close to the Promised Land. Moses is talking to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, who wanted to settle in the east side of Jordan and Israel was prepared to go across the Jordan to the west side to clear the land of the Canaanites.

**Numbers 32:20** *And Moses said unto them [the tribes of Reuben and Gad], If ye will do this thing [meaning cross the Jordan and fight to clear the land], if ye will go armed before the LORD to war,*  
21) *And will go all of you armed over Jordan before the LORD, until he hath driven out his enemies from before him,*  
22) *And the land be subdued before the LORD: then afterward ye shall return, and be guiltless before the LORD, and before Israel; and this land shall be your possession before the LORD.*  
23) *But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and [here's the eternal principle] be sure your sin will find you out. (KJV)*

In the case of Paul, yes, he now had his sins right before his face and had to repent of them and overcome them. But now he was forced to face those sins and the consequences of those sins by going back to the synagogues of those he persecuted. You think Paul might like to go back in time and take back what he did? I think so. We would too. And not have put people in prison and not have murdered or tortured people. You think he might like to go back and undo his past? In other words, do you think Paul might like to have a “do over”? Of course, he would. Christ gave Paul that very chance, as much as possible, a “do over” to correct the error of his previous teachings and without doubt the chance to repent and to apologize to those to whom he had caused great harm to come to. Let's go to Galatians 6:7; Paul is now writing from much experience, after his calling and notice what he says about this principle of facing your sins, going back, repenting and making amends. Paul is writing to the church:

**Galatians 6:7** *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. (KJV)*

Obviously, Paul reaped what he sowed in persecuting Christians.

8) *For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.*

9) *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*

10) *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men [men is in italics], especially unto them who are of the household of faith. (KJV)*

He is undoubtedly, looking back on his life and looking at the harm he has done to so many in his misguided zeal. He's encouraging Timothy to do good to all, especially to those in the church of God. The point is, the Father and His Son mercifully gave Paul the opportunity to go back and make matters as right as could be possible under the existing circumstances. If he had somebody put to death, he couldn't resurrect them, that wasn't part of God's plan but he could go back and try to undo the hurt and harm caused by those deaths or imprisonments or torture. He had to face his sins and he was given the opportunity for a "do over".

That leads us to the fourth point.

#### **4. Let's notice the change in Pauls' attitude after his conversion.**

From this zealot that wreaked havoc upon the church—tortured, imprisoned, killed people, murdered people, threatened people, beat people—from that being a self-admitted violent man, to a man who emphasizes what we're going to read now. Notice what he said to Timothy in his second letter to Timothy, in 2 Timothy 1:7.

**2 Timothy 1:7** *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. (KJV)*

Notice the emphasis as we go through these scriptures. Paul is stressing love as a gift from God Almighty. Now notice what he says to the church at Rome, let's go to Romans 13:10. You're going to see a theme going through all of these Epistles from Paul and notice his change of heart, change of attitude and change in emphasis.

**Romans 13:10** *Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (KJV)*

This former Pharisee says, love is the fulfilling of the law; not murder, not hatred, not beatings and torture. Now notice what he says to the church in Galatia, Galatians 5:14. It's amazing the transformation of Paul.

**Galatians 5:14** *For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (KJV)*

Totally contrary and opposite to what he had done before. Now to the church at Ephesus, go to Ephesians 5:2. Do we see a theme here?

**Ephesians 5:2** *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us [he would have never said that before being stricken down on the road to Damascus], and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. (KJV)*

That's the church at Ephesus, now the church at Philippi, let's go to Philippians 2:1, out of the New King James.

**Philippians 2:1** *Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,  
2) fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. (NKJV)*

He's having the same love I have for you; you have it back to me and you have it among yourselves. That of course is the love of the Father and His Son. What about the church in Colossi? Go to Colossians 2:1.

**Colossians 2:1** *I want you to know how much I have agonized for you and for the church at Laodicea, and for many other believers who have never met me personally.  
2) I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God's mysterious plan, which is Christ himself. (KJV)*

His emphasis is on love and being bound together, tied together, by love. Now notice what he said to the church in Thessalonica, in 1 Thessalonians 3:12. Every Epistle—just about every one—notice the change of heart of Paul and the emphasis.

**1 Thessalonians 3:12** *And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: (KJV)*

Look at the change in heart; Paul is saying, "I have this abiding love for you and I want you to have it toward one another and toward all people—your neighbor, the guy at the grocery store, the clerk at the checkout line".

Now look at the church at Corinth, go to 2 Corinthians. Remember 1 Corinthians was a letter of admonition to put this man out who was having illicit sexual relations with his stepmother. 2 Corinthians had a different tone. Notice what Paul says, his attitude and care and love.

**2 Corinthians 2:4** *For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears [referring to 1 Corinthians]; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you. (KJV)*

This man who murdered and tortured and put in prison, so many, now is saying to the church in Corinth—this dysfunctional church— “I love you dearly and I want you to know that”. Look at the emphasis of all these letters, illustrating the dramatic change of Paul’s mind from being a persecutor to someone who loved the brethren. Does this now sound like a violent man? A man that would do murder and torture? A man whose mission was to imprison, break up families? What the Almighty wants us to realize from Paul’s example is the following. As He did with Paul, He’s doing the same thing with all of us. As He had Paul confront his past, confront his sins and giving Paul a “do over”, He’s doing the same thing with us. That leads to the last point.

### **5. Similarly the Father gives us the opportunity for a “do over”, every day of our lives.**

After our conversion, we have the opportunity for a “do over”, every day of our lives. After Paul’s conversion, do you think he might have some regrets? He might look back after he was stricken down and had his sight restored and is told to go to the synagogues and talk to these people. Do you think he might have had some sleepless nights and knots in his stomach, regretting what he had done and then have to go back and meet with these people and preach the truth to the very people he persecuted? Do you think he might want to undo the past? Of course, he would. If we are honest with ourselves, all of us feel the same way. I would like to go back and undo some things that I said or undo some things that I did or undo some things where I hurt people. While we can’t undo the past, we can’t do that but what our loving Father does is bring circumstances and conditions to pass to see if we have learned from our past sins—learned from our past mistakes—so that we won’t repeat them. He gives us a “do over” so He can see that and we can prove ourselves to Him.

He did that with ancient Israel. They failed, but He gave them the opportunity to change. Go to Deuteronomy 8:2. Moses is admonishing Israel and telling them, “Look, you’ve been wandering forty years in the wilderness and did so for a reason and I want you to learn from that”. This is out of the New King James.

**Deuteronomy 8:2** *And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, [He says “remember that”—but now he’s telling them why—to what purpose, to what end] to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. (NKJV)*

He did it to ancient Israel, but we know they didn’t have the heart to change. Yehovah is doing the same for us and we do have the heart—after repentance, after baptism, after conversion—remember Christ said in John 14, “My Father and I will come make Our abode in you”. So now the Father and Son are living inside us. We are being tested to see whether or not we want to undo the past, whether or not we will repeat the sins of the past, or whether like Paul, we have a total change of heart—from evil to love.

Let's now look at Peter's opportunity for a "do over". Peter committed one of the most egregious sins anyone can commit. Let's go to Mark 14:66. We're picking up the story after Jesus Christ was taken captive on His last night on earth. We read this and go over this at Passover time. Granted, Peter and the apostles did not have the Holy Spirit at this time. But notice the scenario. This out of the New King James.

**Mark 14:66** *Now as Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came.*

*67) And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with Jesus of Nazareth." (NKJV)*

Notice what Peter said in verse 68.

*68) But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you are saying." And he went out on the porch, and a rooster crowed. (NKJV)*

He got away from this young woman that asked the question.

*69) And the servant girl saw him again, and began to say to those who stood by, "This is one of them."*

*70) But he denied it again. And a little later those who stood by said to Peter again, "Surely you are one of them; for you are a Galilean, and your speech shows it." (NKJV)*

We have evidence. Now verses 71.

*71) Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this Man of whom you speak!" (NKJV)*

He is denying Jesus Christ, after seeing the miracles, after spending three and a half years following Christ around the countryside. "I don't know this man you're talking about."

*72) A second time the rooster crowed. Then Peter called to mind the word that Jesus had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And when he thought about it, he wept. (NKJV)*

Peter had just committed one of the most horrible sins of denying Jesus Christ; that he even knew Him. Now let's notice Peter's "do over" because the Father and Jesus Christ brought the conditions to give Peter the chance to undo what he did before. Let's go Acts 5:26, out of the NIV. Peter has an opportunity. Will he pass or will he fail?

**Acts 5:26** *At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles. They did not use force, because they feared that the people would stone them.*

*27) The apostles were brought in and made to appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest.*

*28) We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,” he said. “Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man’s blood.” (NIV)*

Notice Peter’s response; he could say, I’ve never heard of this man, you’ve got the wrong guy.

*29) Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than human beings! (NIV)*

Then, Gamaliel, we read earlier, says, “set them aside” and then spoke to the counsel, to the Sanhedrin. Now let’s move to verse 40 after Gamaliel’s speech before the Sanhedrin.

*40) And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. (NIV)*

What did the apostles do?

*41) And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. (NIV)*

Peter was afraid to suffer shame in the courtyard the night Christ was taken, but now they are rejoicing, including Peter, that they suffered shame for the name of Jesus Christ. Verse 42, notice what they did—they went right back to the temple.

*42) And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.’ (KJV)*

Here, Peter who denied Christ was given the opportunity for a “do over”. He was put in a position just like he was before and the Father was watching to see what he was going to do. After denying Christ in the beginning, now he is put in the same position and he passes his “do over”. Because of that act and the Father’s Spirit in him, it encourages all of us because we can do the same thing through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now let’s look at a second “do over” from Peter with another example we have. Let’s go to Galatians 2:11, This will be out of the New King James. It’s important to note that because the timing is critical here, Galatians was written about 54 or 55 A.D. So, keep that in mind as we go forward.

**Galatians 2:11** *Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed;*

12) *for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, [the Jews coming from James] he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision.*

13) *And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.*

14) *But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?"*  
(NKJV)

We see that Paul publicly, openly, corrected Peter over his sin. What did Peter do about that? Did he repeat it or did he overcome it? Let's go to 1 Peter 1. First Peter was written about 62 to 64 A.D., about eight years after Paul's rebuke, so quite a bit of time has passed.

**1 Peter 1:17** *And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:*  
(KJV)

So, Peter is emphasizing the fact that our Father has no respect of persons, Paul accused Peter eight years previously of having respect of persons, now he's emphasizing the fact that you better not have respect of persons because our Father in heaven does not do so. It's obvious that by this time, eight years or so later, Peter had repented and changed. Now back to 2 Peter 3 which was written a couple of years later after 1 Peter, 64 to 67 A.D., somewhere in there. Ten years after Paul's rebuke.

**2 Peter 3:15** *And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul [this man who corrected him publicly, he calls him a beloved brother] also according to the wisdom given unto him [this is obviously an implication that the correction he received was wisdom from God and he is acknowledging that Paul had that great wisdom given by God Almighty] hath written unto you;* (KJV)

So now twelve to fifteen years after Paul's rebuke, Peter praises Paul and praises him for his wisdom. It is obvious that he wouldn't do so if he didn't pass this second "do over". The first one denying Christ, the second one being a respecter of persons. The point, as we close out this last point is that every single day, all of us have an opportunity to prove to God Almighty, to prove to our Father, that we will not repeat the sins of the past. We will not fall back into the same behavior that we had in the past, the same carnal attitudes that we had in the past, the same sins that we had in the past. We will not repeat them. We have an opportunity to prove, every day, that we will not repeat them.

The problem is, time is running short to do that. It's no secret, it seems like every day that the end of the age is rushing at us like a tidal wave. Every time you turn on the news there is some horrible thing that is done that is just one more nail in the coffin of

this evil, satanic society. So, time is running short because the end is getting nearer and nearer. And of course, it's no secret that we are getting older and older and just out of natural causes, the end of our lives is not that far off, for those of us in our 70's or 80's or more. The fact is, time is running short to do so. The message is, we have to use every single day we have as an opportunity to show our Father that we will not repeat the sins of the past. We will not repeat the same carnal behavior. We will not do so. We have the opportunity for a "do over", every single day. What a blessing that is, when you think about it. We have the opportunity to prove to God that that's in the past, that's gone, I'm not going to do that anymore.

So let's summarize and conclude now: The fact is, none of us, as much as we would like to, can undo our past. We just can't, it's impossible. The sins and the scars and the hurts we have caused, we cannot undo. They are still there. But also, the fact is, we can move forward from that rather than getting stuck in the past and getting quagmired in the past; being in quicksand of the past. We have each day, the opportunity to do things over. We have an opportunity to prove to God Almighty and His Son, our brother, Jesus Christ, that we will walk in His footsteps and not in Satan's footsteps. We have the opportunity to prove to Yehovah that we will never repeat our failures of the past. If we do that, then the "do overs" free us from the past. Once we have overcome them, once we have proved to God Almighty that we aren't going to repeat them again, then we are free from them, we are not bound by them, we are not entrapped or enslaved by them. Because we have proven to our Father that we will overcome them.

The whole message is, what a wonderful Father and Son we serve. Who allow us the opportunity, every single day of our life, "to do things over".