

## **Denying Jesus**

### **Jn 18:15-27**

And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. 16 But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in. 17 Then the servant girl who kept the door said to Peter, "You are not also one of this Man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." 18 Now the servants and officers who had made a fire of coals stood there, for it was cold, and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself. 19 The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine. 20 Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing. 21 Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed they know what I said." 22 And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, "Do You answer the high priest like that?" 23 Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?" 24 Then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest. 25 Now Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. Therefore they said to him, "You are not also one of His disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not!" 26 One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of him whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?" 27 Peter then denied again; and immediately a rooster crowed.

I don't think one can read this story without feeling so bad for Peter. He had such good intentions. But he quickly got in over his head. He had no idea of the future or even what he was capable of doing.

From what we know, I don't think anyone would question Peter's loyalty. He was probably the most active disciple that Jesus had. The other disciples did not argue with Peter but rather all chimed in with him that neither would they deny our Lord. And we know that later on that Peter would take the lead in the church.

Peter was the first to openly acknowledge that Jesus was the Christ. And Peter was surely the most confident of all those disciples. But Peter was human, just like you and I. It is so easy for us to be too self-confident. James the brother of our Lord said that we should always say if the Lord wills we will do such and such.

And everything that Peter had experienced up to this point was under what we would call normal conditions. It was easy to follow Jesus when it was obvious that Jesus was in Control. But now nothing was normal. And it does not appear that Jesus is in control. So Peter is confused. He is in new territory.

But as we read this story it does not seem that Peter's life is being threatened. John has gotten him into the courtyard because he is known to the family of the high priest. It would seem

obvious that the high priest would know that John was a disciple of Jesus. So when John got them to let Peter into the courtyard, the obvious question was, “you are not one of his disciples too are you.” But as we said this was not normal times and Peter is not thinking clearly.

There are several lessons to learn from this passage, and where as Peter’s denial is quite evident, our denials or somewhat covert.

I. There are more ways to deny Jesus.

A. We can denying him with our lives.

1. This is what happens when our lives are not consistent with what we say.
2. John gives us an example when he says that if a person says that they love God and hate a fellow Christian then they are a liar.
3. Also if we say that we have fellowship with God and walk in darkness we are wrong. You cannot walk in darkness and have fellowship with God.

B. We can denying him with our finances.

1. You heard the story I’m sure of the Christian all suited up in the Christian armor described in Ephesians Chapter 6. He had the breastplate of righteousness, the belt of truth, shoes shod with the preparation of the Gospel. He had the shield of faith to quench the fiery darts of Satan. But Satan snuck around behind him and shot him in the pocket book and down he went.
2. Is your checkbook a testimony of your faith in Jesus?

C. We can denying him with our obedience.

1. Jesus said, “Why call you me Lord, Lord and do not do the things that I say.”

II. Why would we denied him.

A. Out of fear.

1. That is why Peter denied Him.
2. Fear is a great motivator.
3. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.
4. But the Bible also says that the fear of man brings a snare, or an occasion to stumble or get trapped.

B. Out of shame.

1. Sometimes it is not fear but we do not want to be ridiculed or made fun of.

2. Mark 8:37-38 Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." NKJV
  3. How could we be ashamed of one who loved us enough to die in our place.
  4. But yet Satan works very hard on this one with Christians.
- C. Because of priorities.
1. A man or a woman may speak of their love for their mates but in their priorities they deny it.
  2. Someone might have their name on a church role, and only occasionally attend the worship service, simply because it is not a priority.
  3. I thin I could count on only one hand the number of Sunday's I have missed worship in the last 40 years. At least there was never a time that I did not attend when I could.
- III. The cost of denying Jesus.
- A. Just think of poor Peter, what did it cost him to deny Jesus.
  - B. It lessens our witness.
  - C. It affects His kingdom.
  - D. It breaks our fellowship with Him.
  - E. If we consistently continue to denying Him, He also will deny us.
- IV. Jesus response to Peter's denial.
- A. He looks him in the eye.
    1. That was immediate and I think intentional.
    2. The Holy Spirit will immediately bring conviction to the true believer.
    3. But some will quench the Holy Spirit.
      - a. 1 Thess 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit NKJV
      - b. To quench the Spirit is to not give in to His leading, His convicting power.
      - c. It is a dangerous thing.
      - d. It is like not paying attention to the symptoms of a stroke or heart attack.
      - e. It will bring suffering and great loss.

- B. He catches him unawares at a second fire.
1. John 21:15-
  2. Three times he questions Peter's love.
  3. Finally He reduces the question to Peter's level.
  4. In this episode of Peter's life Peter learned several things.
    - a. He learned not to question Jesus.
    - b. He learned not to be too sure of himself.
    - c. He learned humility, as we all should when we stumble and fall.

We see from the example of Peter that God's plan is to restore those who fall away. Although Jesus questions Peter's love for Him, Jesus' love for Peter is never questioned. God loves you and he desires only what is best for you. But as a parent, God must sometimes interfere in the life of one of his children.