



Week 4 ~ Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

From last week...

³³ “My dear friends, I only have a brief time left to be with you. And then you will search and long for Me. But I tell you what I told the Jewish leaders— you’ll not be able to come where I am. ³⁴ “So I **give you now a new commandment: Love each other just as much as I have loved you.**

³⁵ For when you demonstrate the same love I have for you by loving one another, everyone will know that you’re My true followers.”

Today’s Text: John 13:36-38 *The Passion Translation*

³⁶ Peter interjected, “But Master, where are You going?” Jesus replied, “Where I am going you won’t be able to follow, but one day you will follow Me there.”

³⁷ Peter the rock said, “What do you mean I’m not able to follow You now? I would sacrifice my life to die for You!”

³⁸ Jesus answered, “Would you really lay down your life for Me, Peter? Here’s the absolute truth— before the rooster crows in the morning, you will say three times that you don’t even know Me!”

- Discussion:

- ³⁶ Peter interjected, “But Master, where are You going?” Jesus replied, “Where I am going you won’t be able to follow, but one day you will follow Me there.”
 - What is Peter responding, or more accurately, *reacting* to? It’s what Jesus had just said in verse 33...
 - “My dear friends, I **only have a brief time left to be with you.** And then you will search and long for Me. But I tell you what I told the Jewish leaders— **you’ll not be able to come where I am.**
 - Jesus was saying that He would have to **go to the Cross alone** (Matt. 23:29; John 7:34; 8:21; 12:8, 35), fulfilling scripture and establishing a “plumb line” for personal salvation.
 - Jesus was also letting them know that they would be following Him soon. Eleven of the twelve disciples would be martyred, only John dying a natural death.

- **Question?** Are these three verses really about Peter's denial, or more his determination to prove himself to Jesus? His insecurity, doubt, and even fear of possibly being "left behind" seems to be ruling his emotions at this point. He is operating out of self-confidence, self-sufficiency, and self-self! "It takes God to pursue God!" What response might Jesus have been looking for from Peter?
- **DO EVERYTHING** in dependence on Me. The desire to act independently—apart from Me—springs from the root of pride. Self-sufficiency is subtle, insinuating its way into your thoughts and actions without your realizing it. **But apart from Me, you can do nothing:** that is, nothing of eternal value. My deepest desire for you is that you learn to depend on Me in every situation. ~ **Jesus Calling** (September 6)
- ³⁷ **Peter the rock said, "What do you mean I'm not able to follow You now? I would sacrifice my life to die for You!"**
 - **TRUST ME ENOUGH** to let things happen without striving to predict or control them. Relax, and refresh yourself in the Light of My everlasting Love. My Love-Light never dims, yet you are often unaware of My radiant Presence. When you project yourself into the future, rehearsing what you will do or say, you are seeking to be self-sufficient: **to be adequate without My help.** ~ **Jesus Calling** (October 10)
 - **What was Peter thinking:**
 - **Peter had been part of Jesus' inner circle...**He likely assumed that Jesus was going to want him to go with him and was shocked that he might actually be left behind! His track record with Jesus had a few holes. There is the time when Peter and the other disciples are in a boat and Jesus comes out to them walking on water...
 - ²⁸ Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water." ²⁹ "Yes, come," Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted. ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?" (Matt 14:28-31 NLT-SE)
 - **Peter seemed to find courage in his self-sufficiency...**Instead of leaning on Jesus and saying something like, "I trust you, Jesus. I will follow you wherever and whenever you want," Peter seems to get defensive and acts shocked Jesus' retort.
 - **Loyalty:**
 - **We tend to remain faithful** in our fidelity of thoughts and words when we feel we are being blessed by Him, but when some trial or unpleasantness comes along in our life, our little songs of praise on our lips begin to die out and we begin to question God and doubt His love for us - which we were so sure of just the day before.
 - **The Spirit of God Himself bears witness with our spirit** assuring us that we are the sons (and daughters) of God; And because we are His children, then we are His heirs also; heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ (sharing His inheritance with Him); only we must share His suffering (remaining loyal during the sufferings of this present life) if we are to share His glory." (Romans 8:16,17)

- Faithless is he that says farewell when the road darkens. ~ J. R. R. TOLKIEN, The Fellowship of the Ring

After starting your Christian lives in the Spirit,
why are you now trying to become perfect
by your own human effort?

(Gal 3:3 NLT-SE)

- **“Missing the Boat”**
- **Timing is everything.** Peter’s timing in the matter of following Jesus’ lead could not have been more off...
 - ² Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart. ³ Pray for us, too, that God will give us many opportunities to speak about his mysterious plan concerning Christ. (Col 4:2-3 NLT-SE)
 - Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith. (Gal 6:10 NLT-SE)
 - We know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. (Rom 8:28 NLT-SE)
 - Paul, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, encouraged them that they had NOT **“missed the boat”** as far as Jesus’ second coming...
 - ² Don’t be so easily shaken or alarmed by those who say that the day of the Lord has already begun. Don’t believe them, even if they claim to have had a spiritual vision, a revelation, or a letter supposedly from us. ³ Don’t be fooled by what they say. For that day will not come until there is a great rebellion against God and the man of lawlessness is revealed—the one who brings destruction. ⁴ He will exalt himself and defy everything that people call god and every object of worship. He will even sit in the temple of God, claiming that he himself is God. ⁵ Don’t you remember that I told you about all this when I was with you? ⁶ And you know what is holding him back, for he can be revealed only when his time comes. ⁷ For this lawlessness is already at work secretly, and it will remain secret until the one who is holding it back steps out of the way. ⁸ Then the man of lawlessness will be revealed, but the Lord Jesus will kill him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by the splendor of his coming. (2 Th 2:2-8 NLT-SE)
- ³⁸ **Jesus answered, “Would you really lay down your life for Me, Peter? Here’s the absolute truth— before the rooster crows in the morning, you will say three times that you don’t even know Me!”**
- **The opposite of DENY is to CONFESS:**
 - If you **confess with your mouth** that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Rom 10:9 NLT-SE)
 - ³² **“Everyone who acknowledges me publicly here on earth, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. ³³ But everyone who denies me here on earth, I will also deny before my Father in heaven. (Matt 10:32-33 NLT-SE)**

- The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will **confess his name before my Father** and before his angels. (Rev 3:5 ESV)
- **Luke's record** of this scene is a bit different than the apostle John's, and reveals another aspect of what's going on inside him...
 - ³¹ “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. ³² But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers.” ³³ Peter said, “Lord, I am ready to go to prison with you, and even to die with you.” ³⁴ But Jesus said, “Peter, let me tell you something. Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me.” (Luke 22:31-34 NLT-SE)
- **Reality Check**...Jesus is revealing to Peter just how far he is from the truth. This is a "reality check" for Peter. So, what can we do to bridge the gap between **kingdom** reality and **human** reality?
- **The truth is**...Jesus has already done everything that can be done, and needs to be done, to bridge the gap.
 - ⁵ “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing...I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. ¹⁶ You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other (John 15:, 16-17 NLT-SE)