

Peter Denies Knowing Jesus

(Men's Life Bloomington & God @ Work – Denny Smith)

Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22

Major Segments:

- Jesus shares the Passover dinner, and then declares that all of the disciples will fall away on account of Him.
- Peter and the other disciples declare they will not fall away, and are willing to die for Jesus. Jesus tells Peter that Peter will deny him three times before the rooster crows.
- Peter watched from a distance as Jesus was taken before the high Priest, beaten and spit upon. Then three different people spoke to Peter, saying that he too was with Jesus. Each time, Peter denied that he knew Jesus.
- When Peter heard the rooster crow, he saw Jesus looking at him, and remembered Jesus words. He left the courtyard and cried bitterly.

Questions:

- Why do you think that Jesus told the disciples that they would fall away on account of him?
What do you see as important about the way in which he told them this?
- What are your thoughts about how Peter and the disciples responded to Jesus? If you had been one of the disciples, how do you think you would have responded, AND WHY?
- Imagine being Peter when three people accused him of being a follower of Jesus. Are you surprised by how he responded? Why or why not? How were Peter's actions different from the other disciples?
- What thoughts and feelings do you imagine Peter had when the rooster crows, and Peter sees Jesus looking at him.

Action Questions:

- Peter denied Christ almost immediately following a time that Peter was most committed to Christ and ready to lay down his life for Jesus. How can you relate to that in your own life?
- Have you considered the fact that all of the other disciples fell away just as Peter did? What is the difference between the person, like Peter, who is publicly recognized in his failure, and those who are not exposed or called out? What are ways that you, and other believers, deny Christ today?
- What are the most important things that you do, or can do, help keep yourself from denying Christ?
- Peter felt personally convicted of his failure when he heard the rooster crow. What has or does God use in your life as the "crow of the rooster?" Share how you may recognized it, and respond or ignore it, when the Holy Spirit convicts you? What is the key to you hearing "the crow of the rooster?"

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After Jesus shared the Passover dinner with His disciples, and had given them the bread and the wine, He told them "This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered."

Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." When Jesus told Peter that Peter would deny Him three times before the cock crowed, Peter again declared "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you!" And all the other disciples said the same.

Later, Jesus and His disciples had gone to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed three times to His Father.

Judas then arrived with the Roman Guards, who took Jesus and led him to the home of the former high priest. Peter followed at a distance. Once there, he sat by a charcoal fire in the middle of the courtyard. A servant girl looked at him and said, "Aren't you one of his disciples?"

"No ... no, I'm not." He then moved to a different part of the courtyard.

The old priest questioned Jesus concerning his teachings. Jesus said, "I taught in public places, and didn't hide anything. If you want to know what I taught, ask these who heard me."

The high priest asked, "Tell me plainly. Are you the Messiah, the Son of God?"

Jesus said, "Yes, I AM."

The priest was shocked and ripped his clothes. He shouted, "We don't need anything else! You heard him. He blasphemes God." Everyone yelled, "Kill him!" They beat him and spit on him.

Peter was watching this from the courtyard. One of the men looked at him and said, "Here's one