

Mrk57 – Would You Deny Jesus? – Mark 14:66-72

WHAT does it mean to “Deny Christ”?

HAVE you ever Denied Him?

WOULD you ever Deny Him?

Let's Pray

We are in the **Horror-Filled** last **night**
of the **Earthly Life** of Jesus

This night began **with** the **Last Supper**

& **Jesus instituting**
the **incredible Sacrament** of **Communion**

that **Symbolizes**
the **ONENESS** of **our Life with His**

But the **Life-Changing Last Supper**
was **followed** by the **AGONY of Prayer** - in **Gethsemane**

& **then** the **BETRAYAL** of **Judas Iscariot**
& The **ARREST**

& The **BRUTALITY** of the **Temple Guards**
& The **MOCK TRIAL** before the **Sanhedrin**

Followed by more **ABUSE**
FROM the **Religious Leaders** themselves

& Jesus still Faces a 2nd MOCK Trial before Pilate

& More Tremendous Abuse –
All Before he gets to the CROSS

& Right in the MIDDLE of all this – We find Peter
DENYING that he even KNOWS Jesus at all

& Guys - We HAVE TO SEE
a Picture of Ourselves - In Peter's Denial of Christ

Like ALL of scripture
Peter's Denial is a Picture

Either of what we HAVE DONE
OR of what we COULD DO

After 30 years in Church Leadership
I've seen an AWFUL LOT of people – STOP following Jesus

I was speaking to a friend the other day
Who helped us start our First Church 29 years ago

& he asked me a question that was too big to answer

He said, “*Why do we know SO MANY People from the old days
who are no longer following Jesus?*”

How can people just STOP following Jesus?

& **I wonder** – **how** many of **those people thought**
(**When** they **WERE following Jesus**)

that **one day** they **would Turn Away**, & **NOT follow him**

I **Don't think** – that **ANY of them**
Thought That about **themselves**

When they **WERE following Jesus**

But – **wouldn't it be GOOD** – **For us** - to **consider**
that – **THIS COULD happen** to **us**

That we **HAVE** – **in our Flesh**
the **Same Potential** to **DENY Jesus** – that **Peter had**

Because Maybe –
if **we** are **WILLING to Acknowledge** that

Then MAYBE
We'll be able to **SEE** the **WARNING Signs**
WHEN they **show up** in our **lives**

& **Maybe** we will **be able** to **Repent Quickly**
& **Turn Back** – **AS Peter did** – **before** it's too late

& so – this is NOT JUST Peter's Story

THIS is a **Story** that is **Possible**
In **EACH of our Lives**

Because we **carry** – **within us**

the **SAME - NATURE** of **the FLESH**
the **SAME SIN NATURE** – that **Caused Peter's Denial**

Remember – **Jesus** predicted **Peter's denial** -
Earlier this **same night**

in this same Chapter - Mark 14:27–31 (NLT)

27 On the way (to the Garden), Jesus told them, "All of you will desert me . . .

. . .

29 Peter said to him, "Even if everyone else deserts you, I never will."

30 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, Peter—this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny three times that you even know me."

31 "No!" Peter declared emphatically (Notice that – with ALL the Pride he had in him). ***"Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you!" And*** (because Peter was the outspoken leader) ***all the others vowed the same.***

& **Pls HEAR me** – **you & I have** that **SAME PRIDE** in us
& we **NEED** to be **AWARE & AFRAID** of **it**

& So - we are only hours later now – ON the same night

& we start with 2 vs's
from our last message – to set the stage

Mark 14:53-54 (NLT)

53 They took Jesus to the high priest's home where the leading priests, the elders, and the teachers of religious law had gathered.

54 Meanwhile, Peter followed him at a distance (notice) and went right into the high priest's courtyard. There he sat with the guards, warming himself by the fire.

FIRST - Peter Followed Jesus “*At a Distance*”

Isn't that always the FIRST Problem?

Isn't that always the FIRST Sign?

***Hey, where is so-&-so
haven't seen him at church in awhile***

***Oh, he joined a Video Game club
that meets on Sunday mornings – that's all***

***Hey, I called so-in-so to check on
how he's doing with the Lord – he didn't call me back***

***Hey, did you hear about so-in-so – He left his family,
became a youtube gamer, & is marrying a girl he met online***

Boy, we never saw that coming with him, did we?

YEAH – we actually DID see it coming!

Because he was Following Jesus – AT A DISTANCE

The **First WARNING Sign**
is **always “Following Jesus at a Distance”**

& **THAT** is just what **PETER** was **doing**

& then – V.54 says – Peter went right into the high priest’s courtyard. There he sat with the guards, warming himself by the fire.

WHILE Jesus is in the **NEXT ROOM** Being **Mocked, Humiliated, Abused,** & **SET-UP** to be **Crucified**

Peter is **in** the **Courtyard**
Warming himself by the **Fire**

[IMAGE] Let’s take a look at a picture
of **what** this **HOME** would’ve **Looked like**

& **we don’t** know **WHY**
Peter followed **Jesus** into **the Courtyard**

Maybe he **initially** had **good intentions**

But - One thing we know for sure

**Peter IGNORED the Prophetic Warning
the Lord gave him - just earlier that same Night**

**& he IGNORED it - because he was OVER-CONFIDENT
in his OWN ABILITY to Stand-Up for Jesus**

Peter was the epitome of the "I got this" kinda guy

**& he tried to prove it when he wacked off the ear
of the High Priest's servant at the Arrest in the Garden**

**But Peter's OVER-CONFIDENCE in himself
Blinded him to the WEAKNESS of His FLESH**

**Peter Proudly Proclaimed
he would NEVER ABANDON Jesus
he would NEVER DENY Jesus**

**He made it clear
he was READY to DIE for Jesus**

**BUT – Peter wasn't ready
to STAND UP for Jesus – to a servant girl around a fire**

Mark 14:66–68(a) (NLT)

66 Meanwhile, Peter was in the courtyard below. One of the servant girls who worked for the high priest came by

67 and noticed Peter warming himself at the fire. She looked at him closely and said, “You were one of those with Jesus of Nazareth.”

68 But Peter denied it. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said, . . .

**Maybe Peter was
Caught off Guard – this FIRST TIME**

**Maybe He Reacted - without really Knowing
what he was Saying – this FIRST TIME**

**Maybe it just happened without Peter
Really thinking about it**

**But this Servant Girl – SHOOK Peter UP
& so he LEAVES the Fire**

The 2nd Half of V.68 says
After this first DENIAL . . .

Mark 14:68(b) (NLT)

68 . . . he went out into the entryway (away from the fire – where it was dark). *Just then, a rooster crowed.*

**The Rooster was an ALARM CLOCK
It was a WAKE-UP CALL**

**Like when we start following Jesus from a Distance
& we get a Wake-Up Call from a Fellow Christ-Follower**

& we KNOW that we are in the Dark
Like Peter was - in the Dark Entryway

& we HEAR the WAKE-UP CALL
But we FEEL STUCK in the Entryway – Like Peter

& then - Mark 14:69-70(a) (NLT)

69 When the servant girl saw him standing there, she began telling the others, “This man is definitely one of them!”

70 But Peter denied it again . . .

WHOA, Peter, what happened here?

The first time you got caught OFF-GUARD
- You might’ve answered without thinking -

But NOW – you’re in the Dark Entryway
You HEARD the ROOSTER Crow

WHY Aren’t you remembering what Jesus told you
Just HOURS ago?

Peter - DON’T Deny Jesus again
Stand Up for him this time

Jesus is in the ROOM - NEXT to the Courtyard
Being Humiliated, & Spat On, & Beaten – FOR YOU

STAND UP for him Peter - DON’T sink any lower

But . . . He DOES sink lower

It **seems** like **Peter** kinda
“**gets it together**” – in the **Dark Entryway**

& **heads back** out to **the fire**
thinking “**He’s Got This**” – Like he **always thinks**

But - Mark 14:70(b)-71 (NLT)

70 . . . A little later some of the other bystanders confronted Peter and said, “You must be one of them, because you are a Galilean.”
71 Peter swore, “A curse on me if I’m lying—I don’t know this man you’re talking about!”

Peter – **What are you DOING?**

How can you **keep** going **LOWER**, & **LOWER**, & **LOWER**

WHY is it getting **Easier** & **Easier** for you
To **Deny Jesus** in your **life**?

Now you’re **SWEARING a Curse** on yourself
To **try** to **convince people** to **believe your LIE?**

Peter KNEW the **POWER of Jesus**
& **he KNEW** the **POWER of FAITH** in **Jesus**

He had **SEEN** the **Power of Jesus**
He **EXPERIENCED** the **Power of Jesus**

<p><u>What</u> Peter <u>DID NOT KNOW</u> <u>was</u> the <u>Power of His OWN FLESH</u></p>

Peter did not know what the Apostle Paul wrote in

Romans 7:18–19 (NLT)

18 And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't.

19 I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway.

THIS – is the **Battle** of

The **NEW Nature** - vs - The **OLD Nature**

Peter **DID NOT** understand **THAT Battle**

OR – He **thought** he was **“Above It”**

Peter did not understand the **WAR**

between the **Spirit & the Flesh** – that **Paul explains** in

Galatians 5:17 (NLT)

17 The sinful nature (same as Rom 7) wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.

What happened to **Peter** is

the **Power of the Flesh** – **WON**
over the **Power of the Spirit** – **In His Life**

Guys - **IF you** are **BORN AGAIN** today
Thru Faith in **Jesus Christ**

you & I have **BOTH** the **Power of THE SPIRIT**
AND the **Power of THE FLESH** - **living** in us

***Yeah But . . . - The NEW LIFE we have in Christ
and the Power of The Holy Spirit***

Gives us VICTORY – OVER our Flesh – RIGHT?

Yes – It absolutely DOES

So - **WHY** do we see **SOME CHRISTIANS**
get **TAKEN OUT** by **the FLESH**

& **WHY** do we **see SOME CHRISTIANS**
GROW in the **GRACE & POWER** of **The Holy Spirit?**

**Because – The ONE you FEED – is the ONE that WINS
The ONE you FEED – is the ONE that WINS**

**If you Feed the Flesh - of DENYING Christ
(even in SMALL things)**

**That area of your Flesh
will Grow STRONGER & STRONGER**

**until the POWER of the Holy Spirit inside you
seems NON-EXISTENT**

BUT – IF you feed the SPIRIT

Standing UP for Jesus – even in the small things

The HOLY SPIRIT inside you will Grow & Grow

& the Power of THE FLESH

will be More & More CRUCIFIED in your life

& every time Peter DENIED Christ

He FED the POWER to DENY Christ MORE

& NOW – Peter is at the bottom

of his DENIAL Experience

He had just Denied Christ – for the THIRD TIME

With a Curse on himself – for Emphasis

Mark 14:72 (NLT)

72 And immediately the rooster crowed the second time . . .

& Remember the picture I put up

Showing how Jesus would walk thru the courtyard

to get to the 1st Mock trial

Well now – that Trial – With its Mockery – & Humiliation –

the Spitting & the Beatings – was over

& Jesus was being DRUG Back thru

the SAME courtyard where Peter was DENYING him

On his way to PILATE - & to the CROSS

& so – let's finish with Luke's Acct

Luke 22:61–62 (NLT)

61 At that moment (of the 3rd Denial) the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Suddenly, the Lord's words flashed through Peter's mind: "Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me."

62 And Peter left the courtyard, weeping bitterly.

NOW – How much SELF-CONFIDENCE do you have, Peter?

NOW – How much PRIDE in your Own Strength do you have?

And Peter left the courtyard, weeping bitterly.

Lord, Save us from ourselves

Save us from our SELF-CONFIDENCE

May we be constantly aware

Of the Great Enemy of The FLESH

That is constantly CROUCHING at the Door of our lives

WAITING to TAKE Us OUT

May we FEED the SPIRIT in our Lives

May we STARVE the FLESH

Let's Pray