



The Apostle Apostasy

Community Study Guide: Mark 14:66-72 –Week of June 16th, 2024

1. Peter Denies the King before the Servants

The prophecy given by Jesus finally comes to pass. Jesus has been arrested, He has endured the trial of the leaders of Israel and has been falsely convicted. While the trial was ongoing, scripture records for us another trial of sorts. Peter, who has been following Christ at a distance, is accused of being connected with Jesus. In contrast, Jesus is being accused wrongly and responding truthfully, Peter is being accused correctly and responding falsely. We see a series of inquiries of Peter, in which Peter directly denies that he has any association or knowledge of Jesus. Peter, in his fear, displays a sort of spiritual amnesia. Hours ago, Peter had rushed into battle (and likely to his death) in the garden of Gethsemane. Peter had missed the type of battle that he was in. He looked for a physical battle when a spiritual one was upon him. When he needed to pray, he fell asleep. When he needed to be courageous, he denied the King before the servants. We too should be on guard, so that we likewise would not fall prey to spiritual amnesia. We are tempted to shirk from the truth, to blind ourselves to what is right.

2. The King's Word Pierces Spiritual Amnesia

Following a third denial the crow of a rooster broke into the darkness of the moment. As Jesus is under the mocking of Pharisees telling Him to prophecy, Christ's prophecy is being completely fulfilled. In the middle of Peter's final denial, the rooster crows, and Christ looks to Peter. In that moment, the words of Christ, and seeing His face

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

Spiritual Amnesia, the ability, and capacity to starkly turn away from what we know to be right and true, can fall on all of us. We must guard our hearts, lest we quickly find ourselves straying severely off the straight and narrow. We are all prone to wander, and unless we steadfastly seek the Lord, we too can find ourselves in a position like Peter.

Heart

Wandering hearts must have their direction consistently calibrated. It takes humility to understand our constant dependence on God. We must pray consistently, that we might have a clear vision, and a humble heart.

Hands

We must look to Christ, to His love for us, and let that be what drives us forward. Seek His face. Love His Word. Obey His commands. In all things, let Him be our firm foundation.

is enough to break Peter, to bring him out of his spiritual amnesia. In his brokenness, Peter weeps bitterly. His denial and apostasy of Christ is complete.

3. Broken by Apostasy, Rebuilt to Apostleship

The apostle who boasts of his faithfulness and capacity to Christ is brought low. We see after His resurrection, that Jesus rebuilds the once apostate into an apostle. In John 21 that Jesus reminds Peter of the love that Peter has for Christ. He reminds Peter that in order to do all that Christ would call him to, Peter must love Jesus. Despite all of his sins and his betrayal, Christ redeemed Peter. All of us have the same story. We have all betrayed our Creator. We have all trespassed God. All of us must turn to Christ, see what He has done, respond in repentance and obedience, and be restored by Him.

Read Mark 14:66-72

1. After reading the entire passage, what stuck out to you? In what way were you encouraged or cautioned from the text?
2. Pastor Jan had mentioned that Peter was acting as though he experienced “spiritual amnesia.” What does that term mean? How does Peter’s conduct fluctuate greatly within a short period of time?
3. Why does Peter deny Christ? What does this tell us about the human condition? What does it tell us about ourselves?
4. Inside all of us is the potential to act just like Peter. Consider yourself. Who are the bystanders in your life that you are tempted to deny Christ in front of? What areas of your daily life, private or public, are you hesitant to boldly affirm your knowledge of Christ? How might you overcome those hesitations?
5. **Read Luke 22:54-62** What ultimately broke Peter? Even as Christians, how can/should the face of Christ provoke repentance?
6. **Read John 21:15-19** What happens in this passage? How is this process part of the apostate becoming an apostle?
7. Christ puts a sincere emphasis on loving Him. Why is our love for Christ so essential? How is it fundamental for completing everything else that we are called to?