

HOW TO FAIL

- things had been rapidly changing for the people who were following Jesus
- He had come to Jerusalem knowing that His time was at hand, and had been telling His disciples about the things that would be happening
- it had been a time of confrontation with the religious leaders, and they were secretly plotting on how they could take Jesus out
- it was a time of uncertainty, even though Jesus had plainly laid out for them what would lie ahead

- [Mark 13:23](#) – "But take heed; see, I have told you all things beforehand.
- He warned them several times—
 - To take heed [13:5](#), [9](#), [23](#), [33](#)
 - To watch and be ready [13:33](#), [35](#), [37](#)
- How easy it is when we have clear warnings and direction to still end up going down the wrong path

- now, as we approach the middle of the last week of Jesus' earthly ministry, we want to take a look at Peter, and what led to his denial

- Read [Mark 14:66-72](#)

- there are five lessons that we want to look at that would keep us from going down that same path

1. ([29](#), [47](#)) CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH

- we live in a generation that believes if we have enough will and determination we can accomplish whatever we want to

- maybe that is a carryover from what we call the "Greatest Generation"

- We can do it
- In hardship, we can pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps

- we have become self-reliant = I don't need anyone or anything

- Peter's self confidence manifested itself in three areas—

- He thought he was not like everybody else
 - It is always dangerous when we look around instead of looking up
 - Paul said that we were not wise when we compared ourselves to the people around us = [2 Corinthians 10:12](#) – For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.
- He was confident in his ability to hang in there

- The reality = we are not as strong as we think we are = we always seem to have a higher opinion of ourselves than what actually is the truth
- We need to learn the lesson Paul shared with the Romans = [Romans 7:18](#) – For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.
- Here is the reality = We don't generally stumble in the areas that we know we are weak in. It is the area where we think we can handle it that we are in the greatest danger
 - He tried using carnal methods to fight a spiritual battle

2. [\(31\)](#) ARGUING WITH THE LORD

- how many of us have done the same thing by challenging some portion of Scripture and saying that it doesn't apply to me or my circumstances
- Jesus said, "How can you call me Lord, and not do the things that I say

3. [\(37\)](#) NOT MAKING PRAYER A PRIORITY

- this is perhaps the greatest area that leads to eventual failure
- other things, most things, are more important to us than spending time in prayer
- after finding Peter asleep when He should have been praying, Jesus said = [Mark 14:38](#) – "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."
- Jesus spoke much about prayer during His time with the disciples
 - [Luke 18:1](#) – Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,

4. [\(54\)](#) FOLLOWING AT A DISTANCE

- this is manifested in a couple of ways
 - Do we try to keep our relationship with the Lord a secret?
 - What are the priorities in our lives
 - Does the Lord get the prime time or the left-over time
 - Jon Courson = Was there a time when you were following the Lord with a "front-row" mentality before your schedule filled with hobbies and activities to the point that now you're following Him "afar off"?

5. [\(54\)](#) WARMING YOURSELF IN THE FIRES OF THE ENEMY

- this is manifested in where we turn to find comfort, joy, etc

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