



The Best of Men are Men at Best: Peter's Denials of Jesus

Mark 14:66–72

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As Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came, and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, "You also were with Jesus the Nazarene." But he denied it, saying, "I neither know nor understand what you are talking about." And he went out onto the porch. The servant-girl saw him, and began once more to say to the bystanders, "This is one of them!"

Mark 14:66–69

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But again he denied it. And after a little while the bystanders were again saying to Peter, "Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean too." But he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this man you are talking about!" Immediately a rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had made the remark to him, "Before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And he began to weep.

Mark 14:70–72

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I. Faithless confidence (vv. 27–31)

Faithless confidence

And Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away, because it is written, ‘I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP SHALL BE SCATTERED.’ But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.” But Peter said to Him, “Even though all may fall away, yet I will not.” And Jesus said to him, “Truly I say to you, that this very night, before a rooster crows twice, you yourself will deny Me three times.” But Peter kept saying insistently, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!” And they all were saying the same thing also.

Mark 14:27–31

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- I. Faithless confidence (vv. 27–31)
- II. Cowardly denial (vv. 66–71)

Cowardly denial

As Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant-girls of the high priest came, and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked at him and said, “You also were with Jesus the Nazarene.”

Mark 14:66–67

Cowardly denial

But he denied it, saying, “I neither know nor understand what you are talking about.”
And he went out onto the porch.

Mark 14:68

Cowardly denial

And after a little while the bystanders were again saying to Peter, “Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean too.” But he began to curse and swear, “I do not know this man you are talking about!”

Mark 14:70-71

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- I. Faithless confidence (vv. 27–31)
- II. Cowardly denial (vv. 66–71)
- III. Broken contrition (v. 72)

Broken contrition

Immediately a rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had made the remark to him, "Before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." And he began to weep.

Mark 14:72

Broken contrition

The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, “Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times.”

Luke 22:61

Broken contrition

And now I come to the great thing which so much troubleth my conscience, more than anything that ever I did or said in my whole life. And that is setting abroad of a writing Contrary to the truth, which now here I renounce and refuse as things written with my hand contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart and written for fear of death, and to save my life if it might be. And that is all such bills and papers which I have written or signed with my hand since my degradation, wherein I have written many things untrue. And forasmuch as my hand offended, writing contrary to my heart, my hand shall first be punished therefore, for may I come to the fire, it shall be first burned.”

(Ridley 134-135)

Broken contrition

But then came the time of Cranmer's triumph. With a light heart, and a clear conscience, he cheerfully allowed himself to be hurried to the stake amidst the frenzied outcries of his disappointed enemies. Boldly and undauntedly he stood up at the stake while the flames curled around him, steadily holding out his right hand in the fire, and saying, with reference to his having signed a recantation, "This unworthy right hand," and steadily holding up his left hand towards heaven. Of all the martyrs, strange to say, none at the last moment showed more physical courage than Cranmer did. Nothing, in short, in all his life became him so well as the manner of his leaving it. Greatly he had sinned — but greatly he had repented.

J.C. Ryle

Broken contrition

After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way. Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will also come with you." They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing. But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.

John 21:1-17

Broken contrition

So Jesus said to them, “Children, you do not have any fish, do you?” They answered Him, “No.” And He said to them, “Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch.” So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord.” So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea. But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net full of fish.

John 21:1–17

Broken contrition

So when they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have now caught." Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples ventured to question Him, "Who are You?" knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and the fish likewise. This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead.

John 21:1-17

Broken contrition

So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs." He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Shepherd My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Tend My sheep.

John 21:1-17

Takeaways...

1. Jesus remains faithful when we are faithless.

Takeaways...

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

Luke 22:31–32

Takeaways...

1. Jesus remains faithful when we are faithless.
2. Momentary weak faith is different than permanent denial. (Judas vs Peter)
3. While there is life and breath, there is opportunity to return to God.

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