

THURSDAY, APRIL 13

Mark 14:66-72

Pastor Paul

Mark 14:26-31: Jesus' Predicts Peter's Denial

On the night he would be betrayed, Jesus told his disciples that he would soon be arrested and crucified and that all his disciples would scatter. But Peter would not hear it. He replied, "even though they all fall away, I will not...If I must die with you, I will not deny you" (v29, 31). It was a bold statement. **Peter was confident in his faith.**

Mark 14:66-72: Peter's Denial

But **Peter's confidence soon turned to fear** as he followed from afar after Jesus' arrest. A young servant girl came and recognized Peter as a follower and disciple of Jesus. Peter, fearing what could happen to him, denied he ever knew Jesus. And he proceeded to deny Jesus three times, just as Jesus had predicted. After the third time, the rooster crowed and **Peter's fear turned to despair.** He had done the very thing his master predicted, the very thing he confidently told Jesus he would never do. He denied knowing and following Jesus. v72 says that he broke down and wept. It was Peter's lowest point as a disciple of Jesus.

John 21:15-19: Peter's Restoration

But Peter's despair turned to hope. In the greatest denials we also see one of the greatest redemptions. In the gospel of John, we see Jesus after his death and resurrection, returning to his disciples. After breakfast, Jesus turned to Peter and asked him three times (to remind him of his 3 denials), do you love me? And each time Peter responded, yes Lord you know I love you. And there, Jesus restored Peter, and revealed how Jesus would use Peter to continue the ministry.

Can't we all relate to Peter in some way? We want to love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and yet as believers, our faith and loyalty to Jesus is constantly tested in this life. Satan is constantly warring against us, tempting us and discouraging us to turn away from our true master Jesus. Sometimes it's the pressures of the world, from work or the media or even our friends who tell us it's ok to only partially follow after Jesus; to deny Jesus in the radical commitments he calls us to. Other times it's our own desires of the flesh which war against our commitment to Jesus. It just feels better to let pleasure be our master than Jesus.

And if we're honest with ourselves, we've failed. We've failed often. And often in spectacular ways. But it's in our despair, in our weakness, that Jesus finds us where he wants. It's a place where we no longer have confidence in ourselves. A point where we recognize that our strength, our wisdom, our abilities are no longer enough to follow after Jesus and love Him with everything we have. Because only then will we look outside of ourselves. And recognize that Jesus is our strength, Jesus is our wisdom, Jesus is our ability. Jesus is the one who was tempted in the desert by Satan three times like Peter but He did not deny His heavenly Father. This is the Jesus who saves us, who loves us and restores us. Jesus restores Peter and calls on him now to go and do the work Jesus has for him. Jesus restores us today and calls us to live for him as well.

Prayer

1. Prayer of repentance for the different ways we deny him daily intentionally and unintentionally.
2. Prayer of thanksgiving for God's grace in sending Jesus so that his perfect obedience would cover over our constant failures.
3. Pray that we may live a victorious life in Him daily strengthened not by our own volition but by the grace He provides.

Questions

1. Have you ever had a humbling moment? What did you learn about yourself?
2. Why do you think Peter was so confident that he would never deny Jesus? Why do you think Peter “broke down and wept” (v72) when he remembered Jesus predicted his denial? Can you relate to Peter’s experience of confidence and/or failures?
3. How do we approach our God with our daily failures? Do we come to him regularly to repent?
4. Now that we are restored by the work of Jesus Christ on the cross, how can you personally live for him?