

# The Kingdom of Heaven

## Denial

### Matt 26.57-75

[As we have been working our way through Matthew's account of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ we have seen,]

- [Our Lord and His Disciples celebrate the Passover and the Lord's Table.]
- [The betrayal of Judas Iscariot for a mere 30 pieces of silver.]
- [Our Lord and His Disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane]

[Today we will consider Peter's Denial of our Lord.]

#### A. The Way leading to the Denial

1. The Disassociation from the Lord (vs 57-58) [- *And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.*<sup>58</sup> **But Peter followed him afar off** unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end. -

While this is not the first time that the disciples had been out of their Lord's presence, since our Lord started His earthly ministry, it is the first time that the disciples were faced with the apparent defeat of our Lord. Up to this point they had not been confronted with the possibility that somehow the religious leaders, or the Romans could actually arrest, convict, and apparently defeat Jesus.]

[It was Matthew who recorded,]

*[Matthew 26:56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. **Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.** ]*

[It was this disassociation, or separation from the admonishment, and encouragement of our Lord that would lead to Peter's denials.]

[**Christian Disassociation** – Christians often become disassociated from their Lord in their Christian Journey. **Some become disassociated,**]

- [**Through disappointment** – They wanted God to do something for them or give them something and they didn't get what they wanted.]

- **[Through discouragement** – Some circumstance has come upon them that the Christian feels God should have protected them from (death in the family, sickness, ect...)]

[There are many reasons why Christians become disassociated with their Lord in our day, but none of them compares to the separation experienced by the disciples and Peter. Peter and the disciples were actually and forcibly removed from the presence of their Lord. Today Christians **always remove themselves** from God's presence, because no human authority is capable of removing a child of God from the presence of the Holy Spirit in our day. **So if you feel distanced from your Lord today, it is only because you refuse to walk near unto God.** God has not left you, and no authority can remove God from you, you have distanced yourself from God.]

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**A. The Way Leading To The Denial**

**[The Marks of a Disassociated Christian,]**

- [A failure to Read their Bible]
- [A failure to Earnestly Pray]
- [A failure to be regular in Church]
- [A failure to give in tithes and offerings]
- [A failure to sacrificially serve God]

**[The Danger of Disassociation from God** – If you have become disassociated from God or distanced from God then know that you have set yourself up for a fall. You may even come to the point of denying the Lord who loves you and gave Himself to save you.]

2. **The Defilement of the Lost** (vs 58; **Prov 13.20**; 2 Tim 2.16-17; 1 Cor 15.33) [*– But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, **and sat with the servants**, to see the end.* – Far too often, God's people, all people, underestimate **the importance and influence of our associations.** What do I mean by our associations, I mean those who are around you at the moment. This is none other than **peer pressure** working dynamically and momentarily upon our lives. ]

Prov 13.20

[Peter had walked in the presence of our Lord for the last three years. The group of disciples slept near our Lord, they saw each others bed head when they woke up in the morning, likely noticed each others odors (bad breath among others), ate meals together, picked on each other, joked together, learned from our Lord together, and most notably held each other accountable. People are good about recognizing friends. We are quick and often glad to attribute our strength of character to those who we think have influenced us the most. However, **people are slow to recognize, and often deny, the marked influence of those we hardly know but are in our presence at the all-important moments of decision.** Of which Peter's denial vividly reveals for us in this text.]

**[The Bible warns each of us, in no uncertain terms of the powerful influences that have, do, and will impact our lives.** The Bible declares:]

Prov 13.20

*[2 Timothy 2:16-17 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. <sup>17</sup> **And their word will eat as doth a canker:** of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;]*

*[1 Corinthians 15:33 **Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.** ]*

*[Proverbs 13:20 **He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.** ]*

John 18.16

[Without a doubt God warns us to be careful about those with whom we associate. Those who are around you will and are influencing you. Some of you here have already erected a defensive wall in your mind. You refuse to believe that just being in the presence of someone can influence your decisions and actions. Those who refuse to hear and heed the warnings and instruction given by our Lord are the ones most likely to fall as Peter fell.]

[Open your hearts and minds and hear the Word of God.]

[From this passage we discover:]

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1. The Disassociation from the Lord
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- a. **The Remarkable Speed with which our associations affect us (vs 58)**  
 – **But Peter** . . . **sat with the servants**, . . . – Peter had no sooner come into their presence and sat down when the denials began. Most of the Gospels group Peter’s denial together so that one might think that one denial came right after another, it’s just the way the events were recorded in those Gospel records. But the Gospel of John reveals a bit more of the dynamic of Peters denials. John wrote:]

**[John 18:16-17]** *But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. <sup>17</sup> Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. ]*

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[Almost immediately upon entering the High Priest’s house Peter finds himself openly denying the Lord Jesus Christ. He then goes over and sits down by the fire right in the midst of this angry, accusing crowd. It appears that Peter is almost immediately affected by those who are around him.]

[**Child Examples** - Now think for just a moment about the remarkable speed with which our associations affect us. A child, in the presence of his parents, will be well mannered and respectful. All it takes to turn this angelic, peaceful, esteemed presence into a Tasmanian Devil is a walk through one door, out of the room with his parents, and through the entrance into another room where another terror of our culture is waiting. But remove the terror of our culture and place another respectful, well mannered child in the second room and the whole dynamic of association is immediately transformed.]

- b. **[The Resilient Denial that our associations affect us** – It seems in our day that people refuse to recognize the almost immediate influence that those in our presence have on us. Until we recognize and admit that those who merely stand in our midst can undeniably affect how we think and act we will continue to be misguided by our associations.]

[This is not only true about children, **it is true about mature adults** as well, it is more readily observed in Children.]

- c. **[The Resolve to be Distinctly Christian in spite of our Associations** – The whole point in recognizing the immediate influence that our associations will have upon us and our children is not that we never get around lost people. **The point is that we understand how they might affect us and our children and we decidedly resolve not to allow them to influence us** in ways that would cause us to sin or deny our Lord.]

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**[Parents should teach their children** about the influences they will encounter in life and provide them with the kind of instruction and training that will cause them to stand, even when they are standing in the presence of the enemies of the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.]

3. **The Discouragement of the Lash (59, 65-68; 2 Pet 3.9; Heb 12.2-3)** [– *Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;*]

*[Matthew 26:65-68 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. <sup>66</sup> What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. <sup>67</sup> **Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands,** <sup>68</sup> Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?]*

[Another factor that contributed to Peter's denial of our Lord was the beatings and mocking that were going on while Peter was watching in the high priest's house. Jesus was being severely treated right in front of Peter. Peter knew that Jesus was the Christ, the Lord of all creation, but He was still being persecuted right in front of Peter. **Why would such a powerful God allow Himself to be treated like that?]**

[There are many in our culture who ask this same question only with a different context. They ask, **why would an omnipotent and loving God**

**allow all the evil we see in our World?** The answer to this contemporary question is exactly the same as the answer to Peter's implied question. The answer is,]

*[2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, **not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.**]*

Heb 12.2

**[A Biblical Answer** - God endures the sinfulness and evil of mankind in hopes that all will accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior and will be saved. Jesus endured the ridicule and shame of the high priest's house and Calvary's Cross in hopes that all mankind might be saved.]

**[A Cultural Deception** – Those who ask these questions believe that their question proves the fallacy and inconsistencies of God where in reality they prove without a doubt the unconditional love of God and the inconceivable grace of God. Jesus Christ, without the slightest doubt, had the power, authority, and resources to avoid the cross, but without the suffering of our Savior you and I would be lost for all eternity.]

[The Bible states,]

*[Hebrews 12:2-3 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who **for the joy** that was set before him **endured the cross**, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, **lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.** ]*

**[In the midst of your denial you need Jesus more than anything else in life.]**

**[The severe persecution of our Lord combined with the evil influences around Peter at the time combined and contributed to Peter's denial. They influenced Peter in sinful, worldly ways.]**

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**B. The Wickedness Of the Denial** [from John Butler] [- Notice that Peter's denials reveal **four progressive levels of wickedness.** **These reveal the growing and maturing nature of sin in our lives.** When and if sin ever gets a hold in our lives we can expect it to progress and progress quickly.]

[Always remember,]

- [Sin will take you farther than you want to go.]
- [Keep you longer than you want to stay.]
- [Cost you more than you want to pay.]

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Peter's words were,

1. **Deceiving Words** (vs 69-70; Matthew 26:69,70; John 18:26,27,17,25; Matthew 26:72,74; Mark 14:68) [- Peter provided four distinct lies as he denied our Lord.]

- [He denied being with Christ (vs 69-70) - *Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, **Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.***<sup>70</sup> *But he denied before them all, saying, **I know not what thou sayest.*** - Peter denied being with Jesus in the Garden when Christ was arrested.]
- [He denied knowing Christ (Matt 26.71-72) - *And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, **This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.***<sup>72</sup> *And again he denied with an oath, **I do not know the man.***]
- [He denied being a disciple of Christ (Matthew 26:73-74) - *And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, **Surely thou also art one of them;** for thy speech betrayeth thee.*<sup>74</sup> ***Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man.*** And immediately the cock crew.]

2. **Dishonoring Words** [- It was Peter who once called Jesus, "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16) and on other occasions referred to

Jesus by such respectful titles as "Master" and "Lord." It is this same Peter who now refers to Jesus as,]

[*Matthew 26:72* And again he denied with an oath, I do not know **the man.**]

[*Matthew 26:74* Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know **not the man.** And immediately the cock crew. ]

[*Mark 14:71* But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not **this man** of whom ye speak.]

[There are many in our day who think it is endearing to **refer to God as "the man,"** perhaps they should consider that the only time that this phrase is used concerning Jesus Christ is when Peter is denying his Lord. **Peter's Words were dishonoring words.**]

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**B. The Wickedness of the Denial –**

- Peter's Denials were,
1. Deceiving words
  2. Dishonoring words

3. **Deserting Words (vs 75; Luke 22.33)** [– *And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.* - Peter deserted Christ by his denials, and he deserted Christ when Christ needed him the most. After earlier asserting himself and stating:]

[*Luke 22:33* . . . Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.]

[Here is Peter deserting his Lord.]

4. **Defiling Words (Matt 26.74; cf. Mark 14.71)** [- *Then began he **to curse and to swear,** saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.* – Each time Peter was challenged and found himself openly denying his Lord he is found himself slipping deeper and deeper into sins dreaded sway. This is exactly how sin works, the longer you abide in it the farther it will ask you to go.]

- [Sin will take you farther than you want to go.]
- [Keep you longer than you want to stay.]

- [Cost you more than you want to pay.]

[Is there sin in your life Christian, how far has it asked you to go. Have you denied your Lord in word or action?]

[How far will you allow your sinful denials to go?]

C. **The Weeping After The Denial (vs 75; 2 Cor 7.9-10)** [- *And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. **And he went out, and wept bitterly.***]

Luke 22.61

[**Luke 22:61** *And the Lord turned, **and looked upon Peter.** And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.]*

[Having rendered his three denials, our Lord turns and looks with His supernatural flaming eyes right into the eyes of Peter. As our Lord looked into Peter's eyes Peter could tell that Jesus wasn't looking at Him, **Jesus was looking into him, and our Lord's gaze pierced right down to his heart.** Peter couldn't help himself, he began to weep, and weep bitterly.]

[**There are two kinds of confession in life.**]

**There are those who,**

- **Are Sorry They Got Caught** [- These are those who are quick to say they are sorry. They are sorry, but not for what they did, instead they are sorry they got caught doing what they did. They know that technically what they did was wrong, but they feel the law is unjust, or the company owed them something anyway, **and what they did was only wrong because they got caught doing it.** As soon as they are out of sight, they go right back to doing what they got caught doing.]

2 Cor 7.9

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  3. Deserting words
  4. Defiling words

**[This is hollow sorrow.** It really means nothing. The penitent person is merely trying to appease the sense of justice in the offended individual so that their punishment might be lightened. **Even their sorrow is selfish.]**

[Be careful shallow and selfish individual, you may fool people with your trite sorrow, but you never will fool God. **God looks at the heart, not at outward appearances.]**

[By the way, don't ever think that you get away with your sinful acts, God never misses a thing. Be sure your sin will find you out. This is not the Kind of sorrow that marked Peter on this day.]

- **Are Sorry For The Cost** [- As Christ looked into the eyes of Peter, Christ spoke without ever uttering a word, and Peter heard Him clearly and loudly.]

[Body language is the most revealing form of all communication. What did Jesus say to Peter. **Jesus said, "This is for you."** Peter your sin is expensive. There is a heavy toll to be paid for every sin and Jesus paid it all so that you and I might be free.]

[At that moment Peter got the message, Peter understood the incredible cost that had to be paid for his sin, and Jesus was paying for Peter's sin, even while Peter was denying Jesus. Peter began to weep bitterly.]

[You see, Peter was sorry for the cost that he had laid upon the Lord Jesus Christ. You will never find the desire to fight against sin in your life until you realize the cost for every sin. This is the price Jesus paid on Calvary's Cross. This is the kind of sorrow that will lead you to repentance.]

**[2 Corinthians 7:9-10** Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, **but that ye sorrowed to repentance:** for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. <sup>10</sup> **For godly sorrow worketh repentance** to salvation not to be repented of: **but the sorrow of the world worketh death.]**

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**C. The Weeping After The Denial**

**We discover in our text,**

- That our associations matter in life regardless of our circumstances. Our associations will mold our responses.
- That sin grows within corrupt worldly hearts like a cancer and progresses quick to consume us and drive us to unexpected levels of sinful corruption.
- Complete forgiveness was given to the repentant by the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*1 Corinthians 15:3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;*

CrossRoads Baptist Church , Sep 6, 2020

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