

Review

We are focusing in on the night Jesus was betrayed. As He and eleven of the disciples walked to the Mount of Olives, He revealed to them that they were all going to fall away that very night (Mat. 26:31).

But Simon Peter would hear none of this. He insisted,

Matt. 26:33-35 ...“Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away.” Jesus said to him, “Truly I say to you that this very night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” Peter *said to Him, “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You.” All the disciples said the same thing too.

Of course, a short time later - when the crowd came to arrest Jesus - we saw that...

Matt. 26:56 ...all the disciples left Him and fled.

When Jesus was being taken to the high priest for trial, we read that Peter was following at a distance (Matt. 26:58). When He was let into the courtyard of the high priest, he sat down with the officers and warmed himself at the fire (Mark 14:54).

26:69-75 Peter's Denial

As Peter sat with the others at the fire, a servant-girl of the high priest (Mark 14:66) recognized him in the firelight (Luke 22:56). She told him she knew he was one of Jesus' followers. He insisted that he didn't know what she was talking about.

To avoid more confrontation, he got up and went to another part of the courtyard, by the gate of the porch (Mark 14:68), where it was darker. But even in the darker place, he was recognized by someone else. Again, he denied knowing Jesus, this time with an oath.

Shortly thereafter, a number of them came up to him, saying, "We recognize from your voice that you are a Galilean. You've got to be one of Jesus' disciples." At this point, Peter started cursing and swearing, insisting that he didn't know Jesus.

What an awful decline in just a few hours! "Even if I have to deny You, I won't," he'd insisted. And now he's cursing and swearing that he

doesn't know Jesus.

I have seen this progression far too often. Someone who's on fire for the Lord one day, and then starts a rapid downhill slide.

One day, they're saying,

Luke 22:33 ...“Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!”

But the next day, they start following Jesus at a distance.

They used to walk with Him, but now they don't want to be recognized as a Christian. They decide that they don't want the pressure or the difficulty. They don't want to be put on the spot, and they're ashamed to be recognized as a follower of Christ. So they don't deny Him, they just follow from afar.

Not being in fellowship with other disciples, they begin warm themselves by the fire of unbelievers. They start hanging out with the unsaved crowd.

Unfortunately for them, even in the midst of the unbelieving crowd, the Christian is often recognized by the light on their face. "Hey, aren't you a Christian? What are you doing here with us?"

Realizing that they're too Christianized to prevent themselves from being recognized, they sink further into the darkness. But they discover that even the dark can't hide them. They inevitably get recognized by their speech.

But instead of fessing up, they almost always sink further into the darkness, starting to do things like cursing and swearing. "No one will recognize me as a Christian if I use foul language," they think.

And that works. Peter wasn't recognized as a follower of Christ when he started using that language. However, it was at this point that Luke tells us in his gospel,

Luke 22:61 The Lord turned and looked at Peter...

Peter had strayed so far into the darkness, cursing and swearing, that the only one who recognized him was Jesus.

When the Lord turned and looked at Peter, the rooster was crowing. It was daybreak. Everything about which Jesus had warned Peter had come true. He had failed. He had denied the Lord.

Peter went out and wept bitterly.

27:1-2 Jesus Taken To Pilate

Jesus was bound and taken to Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea appointed by the Roman Empire. In our study next week, we will see Jesus stand before him.

27:3-10 Judas' Fate

Judas had put all of these events in motion by betraying Jesus to the chief priests. He'd been paid thirty pieces of silver for the act, but now he is feeling remorse. The word "remorse" in Greek ("met-am-EL-lom-ahee") means, "to be concerned after the fact."

Judas wasn't sorry he'd done what he did until he saw that Jesus - an innocent man - had been condemned to death. He tried to give the money back to the priests, but they wouldn't take it. It was blood money, and it was forbidden to put in the temple treasury. (Never mind that they'd broken many others of God's Laws by paying it out in the first place!) Instead, they bought an old potter's field as a burial place for out-of-towners who died and weren't claimed by family members.

It is mentioned by Matthew that this action was a fulfillment of prophecy. Jeremiah had spoken of the potter's field of broken vessels as a place of burial (Jer. 19:11), and of buying it for pieces of silver (Jer. 32).

Also, the prophet Zechariah had been portraying the good shepherd when he was rejected by the flock. His wages were an insult, the price of a slave wrongfully killed (Exo. 21:32).

Zech. 11:13 Then the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them." So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the LORD.

Judas was sorry for what he had done. But there are two kinds of sorrow: godly sorrow and worldly sorrow.

2Cor. 7:10 For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

When your child is caught doing something wrong, he is always sorry. If it's a godly sorrow, he will be sorry for what he has done, and will repent. But if it's a worldly sorrow, then he will only be sorry for the consequences he receives for being caught.

Judas' sorrow was not repentant. It was worldly. We know this because it resulted in death. He went and hanged himself. The book of Acts tells us that even the hanging was a mess:

Acts 1:18 Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out.

This was not the result of godly sorrow. Jesus said of Judas,

Mark 14:21 "...It would have been good for that man if he had not been born."

Now, this takes us back to Simon Peter. He had gone out and wept bitterly. He was obviously sorry. But did his sorrow lead to death, or to repentance? Clearly, he repented, and God restored him.

Today, you may be sorry for your sin. The real question is, "What kind of sorrow is it?" Is it a godly sorrow? If so, you will repent. If it is a worldly sorrow, it will only ultimately result in death.