

# Peter Followed from Afar

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Welcome to our service this morning as we join together in the worship of God. We pray that he would bless his world to us as we wait upon him.
- May we know that he is indeed speaking to us. We can begin by singing some verses from Psalm 26. Psalm 26 from the beginning.
- Turn to verse 8.
- So on these verses 1 through 2, 8 of Psalm 26.
- Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity. Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity.
- [ 2 : 0 5 ]     I trust also in the Lord. Slight therefore shall not die.
- Examine me unto me proof.
- Try heart, thy grace, O God. For thy love is before my eyes.
- Thy truth I have brought. With patience, O Lord, for I have not sat, nor with December strong.
- The assembly of the man I did to sit with such a son.
- [ 3 : 3 2 ]     My hands in him, O sense, O Lord, I washed and purified.
- So to thy holy altar, O Lord, for I have not sat, nor with the Lord. So to thy holy altar, O Lord, for I have not sat, nor with the Lord. The Lord, for I have not sat, nor with the Lord.
- And come, as it will I. That I will pray. That I will pray.
- So of thou shere thee. May path with sound declare. And tear up all thy mighty works.
- That great and wondrous art. The habitation of thy house.
- [ 4 : 5 1 ]     Lord, for I have not sat, nor with the Lord. And dwell. In the peace I do.
- The light with the Lord. Thy honor dwell. Let us join together in prayer.
- O Lord, O God, as we continue before you this act of worship, enable us to grasp the truth that you are a God who is ever able to assist us and to enable us to engage in an act of worship.
- The fact of worship for we ourselves that perhaps struggling to achieve that end. We may have a measure of understanding of what true worship involves.
- We are familiar with your words, the scriptures of the Old and New Testament. We are taught therein. That those who worship you must do so in spirit and in truth.
- [ 6 : 1 2 ]     And we often struggle to understand experientially what that entails.
- Whether our activity is indeed a worship. Whether it is devotional exercises carried out individually where we take your word into our hands and where we have your word upon our lips.
- Even singing of your words of praise. We can do all these things. We can do all these things and yet be disengaged from what true worship is all about.

And to take for us at this morning hour and enable us each one to fix our affections on the things above, even on the Lord Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of the majesty on high.

And to seek the ability to gaze upon his face. And to be drawn into his presence. And to have, as another put it, that awesome wonder over wellness as we gaze upon that beauty that is his.

[ 7 : 34 ] And we marvel at the day that will overtake your people when they are themselves with that beauty.

The possessed by them. And that is the miracle of miracles as far as they are concerned. That there will be a day in their experience when they will no longer be what they are in this world.

But that they will be like him. The one who gave himself for them. The one who died in their place on the cross.

May our worship be fixated with him. As we think upon that sacrifice for sin. All that it involved.

All that it involved. All the preparatory work that was his. When he came into this world. Leaving that world that was his without any encroachment made upon his glory.

[ 8 : 49 ] A world that is unlike the world that we inhabit. The heavens above. Occupied by glorified saints and angels that are unfallen.

Whose created activity was to praise and magnify their God. And he was the focus of that praise.

As he is the focus of the praise of the saints who have left this world to be. In a world that they will occupy as disembodied spirits until such time.

As he will come to take all the saints to himself. And well he will rob the grave finally. Of its power. And all the dust will rise.

Those who are his to be with him. And those who are not to their final shame. It is beyond our human faculty to understand how this can possibly be.

[ 9 : 57 ] But it is. It is what the truth has said before us. And may we. Lay hold of that by faith and trust that the day will come. When everybody here will experience this for themselves.

May the resurrection be to a resurrection to glory rather than to shame. And only by way of Christ is that possible. We may distance ourselves time.

Time wise from when that will happen. But. But in a flash even. Without us being able to wreck on it. This will be what will happen.

So help us. To look to you this day. May you bless us. Bless us with your presence. May your words speak to us. May it be drawn.

The means by which we are drawn into your company. May you dwell in our hearts richly. May we glorify your name and magnify it with the help that you are able to afford us.

[ 11 : 04 ] Remember every home and family represented. May the young or be the old. May we give thanks for their presence. May we ask that as they are here. That they may know that they are in good company.

And that they are in the presence of God. In a meaningful way. Bless them in their home circumstances. Whatever these circumstances may be. We know that there are some who have concerns.

Many who have concerns over their own health. And many who have concerns about the health of others. We think of those that we know of. Some who are suffering physical illness from which there is no recovery.

So we remember those in the hospice. We think of those who have terminal illness. Who have yet to experience that last part of their soldier.

But they have been appraised of their end. Unlike many others. They have that privilege. Of knowing that. The end is nigh.

[ 12 : 14 ] But what is that if it is not. Made proper use of. In the sense that we would come to a better. And a greater. And a deeper knowledge of Christ the Lord.

We see so many. And they approach death. And they have no fear of it. And it is because of the.

Of the lack of understanding that. Has overtaken them. That they do not reckon. That death is not the end. It is but.

One. Foot. That will take them closer to judgment. And if they are not. Thus we must all be. Prepared for the judgment. That is promised.

Then we are most foolish. So remember the sick. Remember the hospitalised. Remember those carers. Whose role it is to minister to their needs.

[ 13 : 14 ] Temporal and spiritual. We pray for the. Those of the nursing fraternity. Those who are of the medical professions.

Working in the community. And in hospital and care homes. We remember them all to you. And ask that they may undertake their duties. With. With passion and zeal.

And a love. For their patients. That would ensure that what they do. Is the best of care. Remember those who minister to the grieving.

And the sorrowful. Are they. We remember them to you today. Those who have lost loved ones in recent days. And we pray that you would. Encircle them. With a sense of your presence.

And. The sustaining power of our God. Who is from everlasting to everlasting God. There is nothing in this world. There is nothing in this world. That is strange to you. Nothing will overtake you.

[ 14 : 10 ] As something that was unheard of. Or unknown to you. That may be true for us. But not for our God. And for that reason. We pray that you would. Draw near to them.

When they discover that there are. Aspects of their grieving. That they were not prepared for. We remember the world in which we live. That knows much grief and sorrow.

We think of parts of the world. That have been overtaken. By loss of life. At a scale that we cannot fully comprehend. We are told. By those who are able to ascertain that.

That the world population. Has risen. Considerably. Over the last decade. That the multitude of. Men and women.

Children. Born into the world. Has increased. And yet at the same time. The mortality. That is. Walking apace with that.

[ 15 : 14 ] Is fearful. And when every soul. Must answer to God. We. We know that there are places. Where. No thought of God. Is.

Genuinely brought to their attention. No sense of the need of salvation. The gospel is. Suppressed. The Christ of God. Is. Barely.

Barely. Heralded. It brings grief. And sadness. To our heart. To think of those. Would enter this world. And depart from it. Never having heard. The good news of Jesus Christ.

Be merciful to us. O God. That we will not be held. Answerable. For our own negligence. Or for our own. Failure. To. To heed the word.

And to hear. That you are calling us to yourself. Bless the work. Of the congregation. Remember. The Sunday school. Those who teach it. Those children.

- [ 16 : 12 ] Who are. Part of it. We commit them to your blessing. And the homes. That they are part of. Parents. And grandparents. We commit and commend to you. That they may know.
- That you are their God. Continue to watch over. As the short time. We are together. Blessing your word to us. In Jesus name. Amen. We are going to read.
- From the scriptures. Of the New Testament. And. The gospel of Mark. Chapter 14. Mark. Chapter 14. And we are going to read. From verse 26.
- And we can read through. To the end of the chapter. The point at which. We have taken up the reading.
- Is following on. From. Jesus. And the disciples. Having met together. And. Celebrated. The Lord's Supper.
- [ 17 : 13 ] And after. Having done that. When they had sung. On him. They went out. Into the Mount of Olives. And Jesus. Siaeth unto them. All ye shall be offended.
- Because of me. This day. This night. Before the cock crow. Twice. Thou shalt deny me. Thrice. But he spake. The Lord. And. For it is written.
- I will smite. The shepherd. And the sheep. Shall be scattered. But after that. I am risen. I will go before you. Into Galilee. But Peter said unto him. Although all shall be offended. Yet.
- Will not I. And Jesus. Siaeth unto him. Verily I say unto thee. That this day. Even in this night. Before the cock crow. Twice. Thou shalt deny me. Thrice. But he spake them.
- More vehemently. If I should die with thee. I will not deny thee. In any wise. Likewise also. Said they all. And they came to a place.
- [ 18 : 09 ] Which was named. Gethsemane. And he saith. To his disciples. Sit ye here. While I shall pray. And he taketh with him. Peter. And James.
- And John. And began to be sore. Amazed. And to be very heavy. And saith unto them. My soul. Succeeding sorrowful. Unto death. Tarry ye here. And watch.
- And he went forward a little. And fell on the ground. And prayed. That if it were possible. The hour might pass from him. And he said. Abba.
- Father. All things are possible unto thee. Take away this cup from me. Nevertheless. Not what I will. But what thou wilt. And he cometh. And findeth him sleeping.
- And saith unto Peter. Simon. Sleepest thou. Couldst not thou watch one hour. Watch ye. And pray. Lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit.
- [ 19 : 05 ] Truly is ready. But the flesh is weak. And again. He went away. And prayed. And spake. The same words. And when he returned.
- He found them asleep again. For their eyes were heavy. Neither was they. For to answer him. And he cometh a third time. And saith unto them.
- Sleep on now. And take your rest. It is enough. The hour is come. Behold. The son of man is betrayed. Into the hands of sinners. Rise up.
- Let us go. Lo. He that betrayeth me is at hand. And immediately. While he yet speak. Cometh Judas. One of the twelve. And with him.
- A great multitude. With swords. And staves. From the chief priests. And the scribes. And the elders. And he that betrayed him. Had given them a token. Saying.
- [ 20 : 01 ] Whomsoever I shall kiss. That same is he. Take him. And lead him away safely. And as soon as he was come. He was straight away to him.
- And said. Master. Master. And kissed him. And they laid their hands on him. And took him. And one of them. That stood by. Threw a sword.

And smote a servant. Of the high priest. And cut off his ear. And Jesus answered. And said unto them. Are ye come out. Again. Are ye come out. As against a she.

A thief. With swords. And with staves. To take me. I was daily with you. In the temple. Teaching. And ye took me not. But the scriptures.

Must be fulfilled. And they all forsook him. And fled. And there followed him. A certain young man. Having a linen cloth. Cast about his naked body.

[ 20 : 57 ] And the young men. Laid hold on him. And he left the linen cloth. And fled from them. Naked. And they led Jesus away. To the high priest. And with him. Were assembled.

All the chief priests. And the elders. And the scribes. And Peter followed him. Far off. Even into the palace. Of the high priest. And he sat with the servants.

And warmed himself. And the chief priests. And all the council. Sought for witnesses. Against Jesus. To put him to death. And found none. For many.

Bare false witness. Against him. But their witness. Agreed not together. And there arose certain. And bare false witness. Against him. Saying. We heard him say. I will destroy this temple.

That is made with hands. And within three days. I will build another. Made without hands. But neither so. Did their witness. Agree together. And the high priest.

[ 21 : 53 ] Stood up in the midst. And asked Jesus. Saying. Answerest thou nothing. What is it. Which these witness. Against thee. But he held his peace. And answered nothing.

Again. The high priest. Asked him. And said to him. Art thou the Christ. The son of the blessed. And Jesus said. I am. And he shall see.

The son of man. Sitting. On the right hand of power. And coming. In the clouds. Of heaven. Then the high priest. Rent his clothes. And said. What need we.

Any further witnesses. He have heard the blasphemy. What think ye. And they all condemned him. To be guilty of death. And some began.

To spit on him. And to cover his face. And to buffet him. To say unto him. Prophesy. And the servants. Did strike him. With the palms. Of their hands.

[ 22 : 49 ] And as Peter. Was beneath. In the palace. There cometh. One of the maids. Of the high priest. And when she saw. Peter. Warming himself. She looked.

Upon him. And said. And thou also. Was with Jesus. Of Nazareth. But he denied. Saying. I know not. Neither understand. I.

What thou sayest. And he went out. Into the porch. And the cock. Who. Thou made some again. And began. To say to them. That stood by. This is one of them.

And he denied it again. And a little after. They that stood by. Said again to Peter. Surely. Thou art. One of them.

For thou art. A Galilean. And thy speech. Agreeeth thereto. But he began. To curse. And to swear. Saying. I know not. This man.

[ 23 : 44 ] Of whom. Ye speak. And the second time. The cock. Crew.

And Peter. Called to mind. The word. That Jesus. Said unto them. Before the cock. Rung twice. Thou shalt slay me.

Thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought. Thereon. He wept. Amen. May the Lord. That his blessing. To a reading of sword. Boys and girls.

Before you go out. Just. A word to you. You know that. This week. Maybe. Hopefully. You know. This week is. The.

Harvest. Thanksgiving. Is going to be. On Thursday. And. Harvest. Thanksgiving. Is not something. Modern day. The people.

[ 24 : 45 ] Give much. Thought to. Because. Our harvest. Is really. Something. We. Trust. To other people. Do. But.

It is. Very important. For us. To understand. That. Just as. The Bible. Teaches. Us. God. Is.

The one. Who provides. With. The fruit. Of the ground. Food. For our bodies. Is. Necessary. For us. To live.

And. We. Acknowledge. That. And. It's. Only. The farmer. Preparing. For. That food.

To be. On your. Table. And. My. Table. Because. They're. The ones. That. Made.

[ 25 : 40 ] Sure. That. The ground. Was. From. Weeds. And. From. Disease. And. Ensured.

That. It. Came. To. It. That. So. It. To. In. It.

Many. Things. Do. Go. Sometimes. It. It. Is. The. Seed. Will.

Rot. It. It. It. Can. And. It. It. Gets. Too. At.

The. things can affect the harvest. So when there is a harvest there's a good reason for us to be thankful that God has been good to us and ensured that we have this food. Now the reason I'm thinking about that is because the boys and girls are thinking about the life of Joseph and Joseph was someone who had to suffer a lot before he could become rich and famous as he was going to be. And what happened to him was he was sent to prison and when he was in prison he dreamed a dream and as a result of his dream he came to be released from prison and he was elevated to power.

[ 27 : 27 ] And then he was responsible for feeding the nation and the nations round about. So that when the harvest failed as it did in Egypt by reason of Joseph's ability given to him by God he was able to provide for the people. Not only the people of Egypt but those round about. And as a story and it is a true story you're thinking well what had to happen before the men and women of Egypt could benefit from this harvest that Joseph was to provide them with.

Many things. For example Joseph had to be sent to prison. Joseph had to be deprived of his liberty.

Joseph had to suffer many years there forgotten before the time came where opportunity was given to him to be the source of the harvest to others. And I think in that sense there are many mysteries in the way that God provides for us. The mystery of our harvest. Many of us don't understand what the farmer does when he gets a bag of seed. He sows it. He plants it. He tends it. And he harvests it. And he sells it.

Some of these things we follow. Some of these things we understand. Most of these things we don't see. Most of these things we have nothing to do with them. All we have to do is go to the cove or tesco and buy our food.

But they know all these things. When the harvest of Egypt failed what was going on in Joseph's life nobody knew anything about it.

[ 29 : 42 ] He was in a prison. The darkest dungeon. Nobody knew anything about it. And yet God was using Joseph in his time to be the means by which the Egyptians would be given flour to eat and food to eat.

Not just them but the nations round about. God works at times in ways that we don't understand. We don't see. And yet when we see the outcome of it what we are taught is well we should be thankful to God for what he does.

Even when we don't understand it. Many things that he does that are that are beyond our ability to appreciate it. Well may he encourage us even when we sit down with our cornflakes we're not going to work our way back to when that left the farmyard.

but we should thank God for the provision he makes for us. And most of all remind ourselves that the Bible speaks of our day when there's going to be a spiritual harvest.

A spiritual harvest. When all that he has done in the world by way of his own labourer will yield a harvest and he will be the one who celebrates the harvest coming home that day and he will have the glory and all who are part of that harvest will rejoice with him.

[ 31 : 19 ] Well may God encourage you to think of these things and each one of us the same. We're going to sing as you go out some verses from Psalm 57.

Again we're singing from the beginning. Psalm 57 Be merciful to me O God Thy mercy unto me do thou extend because my soul doth put her trust in thee.

Yea in the shadow of thy wings my refuge I will place until these sad calamities do the holy overpass. My cry I will cause to ascend unto the Lord Most High to God who doth all things for me perform most perfectly.

We're going to sing to verse 5. Be merciful to me O God Thy mercy unto me. Be merciful to me O God thy mercy O God say unto me Do thou love extend because my soul not put her trust in thee yea in the shadow of thy wings my refuge I will place until these sad calamities to holy overpass my cry

I will cause to ascend until the Lord Most High to God to God all things for me therefore most perfectly from heaven He shall stand down on me from from his reproach he pen that would devour me God to serve and mercy forth shall send sorrows my soul am my soul

[ 34 : 59 ] A sharp sword is their charm Be thou exalted very high Above thy hands, O God Let thou thy glory be advanced For all ye earth abroad We turn to the passage that we read from The Gospel of Mark, chapter 14 We can read at verse 54

And Peter followed him afar off Even into the palace of the high priest And he sat with the servants and warned himself at the fire And Peter followed him afar off If I ask a question which you can answer at your liberty Why do we sin?

Why do we sin? And if you're a little bit of a theologian You'll be able to answer the question Because you know from your Bibles That everybody sins Nobody is excluded The Bible tells us that All have sinned and come short of the glory of God Now The fact that you know it Or that you know that that's what the Bible says I'm not for one minute convinced That you believe What the Bible is saying Because even though We may be familiar with what the Bible teaches We don't necessarily agree with what the Bible says It's clear that some don't anyway Some are not happy with the Bible Explanation of what sin is Sin has to do with

A relationship with God or its lack Sin has to do with An awareness of what God Says needs to be done or not done And The The refusal or the The way that we chose to Or choose to Do what God tells us not to Or Vice versa You know the word sin Has got implications Which not many people are willing to accept Some people will explain sin And say it's just human behaviour Just the way we are Why do you want to call it By the name sin It's just Well everybody is different And some people Are more More willing to Live A life where they are Conforming

To the Norms of society Others shall not So So willing to adhere To these norms They don't want to Have God in it They don't want to include God In it by any Manner or means But I'm not interested really In what Society in general May think What I'm concerned with is What the Bible tells us And the Bible tells us That there is a standard By which we are expected to live There are There are norms That are God given There are moral codes That we are expected To live by There are standards Which we are expected To achieve Or attain And we will be Found Answerable To God Who gave us These standards If we do not Arrear to them

[ 39 : 39 ] And that's where sin Comes from Sin is any want Of conformity Unto our Transgression Of the law of God So Putting that question To one side Whether we are Keen or Happy to Acknowledge it As something That can be Considered As a truth That we are to live by You're I would imagine You're happy To acquiesce In The Bible As the standard By which God's People live And the Bible As that standard Which teaches What sin is That those who Believe in that Bible And to live by The standards That the Bible Sets before them That they fully Appreciate What sin Is And it is

Our expectation That those Who live by These standards Would not Be guilty Of their Breach But again We know That can't Be the case Because Even though You might be A believer In God There is sin In your heart And you can't Your nature While it may be Transformed By God's grace The existence Of sin In your heart Is something That you live with With God's help You deal with it With God's help You seek to Overcome it With God's help You seek To ensure That you sin As little as possible But always Understanding Because you're a believer

Because you know God's word Because you understand That it's not By reason of Your perfect Obedience That salvation Is yours But by reason Of the obedience Of the Lord Jesus Christ And his perfect Obedience That does Them save Your conscience As far as Sin is concerned Your sin Your accountability To God Is before you The reality Of your sin The effect Of it Is always In your mind But you know That in the Final analysis The foundation Upon which You're building For eternity Is not Your perfect Obedience As a believer But his Because When we come Into the world We are already Sinners Even before We draw breath We're already Sinners Because sin Is something That mankind Is blighted with By reason Of one fact And that is That God Created man In his image

And he set Man in a place In his order In the order Of his creation Where the man Created Was accountable To him And given The ability To live before Him perfectly But he Didn't And fell And sinned And because Of that man's Sin All have sinned We are told In the Bible And all are Accountable to him But even if That were not The case And it is We've added To the sin Of Adam With our own But because Of the provision Made by God In Christ Jesus We trust That we can Go to him To seek Forgiveness And to seek The wherewithal By which To be More obedient And more Perfectly Conformed To his will As it is Revealed to us In the Bible But the question That arises Is

Not just Do Christians Sin Which we have To acknowledge That they do But why Do they sin To the degree That they do Why does sin Come into their Lives In such A Powerful Way That their lives Are turned Upside down Not always And not every Life But there are Some occasions Where It seems That the Person who Is a Believer The child Of God The one Who has Come to A knowledge Of God Sins Not just Sins But sins To a Degree That That is Undeniably Something that Is shameful And That seems To many To be A denial Of what The truth Of God Is saying Look at



[ 44 : 44 ] The Bible The Bible Is a book That is honest And earnest And it doesn't Hide anything From us And there are Many characters In the Bible That are Highlighted for us Who are famous For their faith Famous for the role That they have In God's kingdom Famous for the way That God used Them powerfully To bring to Fruitionist Purposes In the lives Of this world And those Who are in it That we are going To discover Who he was You have got People such as Abraham As Jacob As David And then we have got People such as Peter And one unifying Feature Of their lives Is this Is that Not only Are they Sinners Saved by grace But at one Point in their

Life Having been Saved by grace That they Sinned Most Awfully They sinned With great Drama When you think Of the apostle Peter You would think That As little Publicity Was as Possible Should be Given To sin To sin If we think About him He was One of the Inner Circle Of disciples And if Anyone Should have A sin Covered Hidden From sight You would want Him to be The one Peter after all According to the Roman Catholic Church Is the first Pope

I don't Know where They got That from But according To them That was His role And if They had Anything to Do with It Peter's Sin would Be hidden It would Be covered But God Has not Seen fit To permit Any conspiracy To hide The sin Of Peter You know When we look At certain Events in The Gospels You will Find that There are Four Gospels And sometimes Three of them The synoptic Gospels Will include One event And all of The three Gospels Will record It John Will be Silent On it Sometimes Two Sometimes You'll find It uniquely Mentioned In one Of the Gospels But the Sin of Peter It is Highlighted In all Four Gospels It is Highlighted In all Four Gospels

God's Word Tells us That this Is what Peter Did Now I Don't Want you To think That what Peter did Was not A sin It was And we Need to Realize That what He did Was sinful You know When you Read that I can't Fail to Be Unmoved By it I can't I can't Be unmoved By it When I Read it Not because I'm looking Down on Peter But because I understand The nature Of what He did You know He denied The Lord He denied The Lord Publicly He denied The Lord With oaths And curses He denied The Lord Having sat With him So many Times Having heard The word Coming from His lip Having been Spoken to So gently So kindly So much Lessons That were Taught By the

Lord To Peter And yet He said I didn't Know him I don't Know him I don't Know who You're Talking About And is That not A sin Is that Not a Sin Someone has Described Peter at This point As being Overwhelmed By it Now we Know that In our Lives There are Incidents And occasions When events Occur Over which We have No control Things Happen And we Get embroiled In them And we Get sucked In or it Affects us In some way It takes A hold Before we Know it We've said Something Done something Been somewhere And we Should not Have been Anywhere near it But this Is not

[ 49 : 46 ] One of These Situations This is Not one Of these Events That That came Upon Peter In our Air But that Doesn't Make it Easy To explain What took Place Happened With Peter Being Forewarned Jesus Had spoken To him Directly Jesus Had spelt Out What was Going to Go back To verse 27 Jesus Said unto Them All ye Shall be Offended Because of Me this Night All of You For it Is written I will Smite the Shepherd and The sheep Shall be Scattered It was Spelt out To him Now Jesus Knew What was Going to Happen He was Supremely Confident In the

Future That Peter Was going To be Embroiled He was Supremely Confident That the Word of God Had elaborated What was Going to Happen To this Child of God To the Disciples As a Whole The Word of God Had Declared It Prophetically This is How it's Going to Be Peter You Know The Word You Know The Lord Who Is Speaking The Word To You And Peter Had Every Reason To Believe The Lord He Had Been Told That One Of Them Would Betray Him And Yet Peter Didn't Believe Him He Didn't Share His Conviction Now I Don't Want To Read Into It What Is Not There But The Ability Of Hindsight Perhaps But All Of Them Were Of The Same Mind We Are Told

Peter Spoke The More Being If I Should Die With Thee I Will Not Deny Thee In Any Wise Likewise So They All Said The Question Why Why Did Peter Do This Why Did He Sin If You're Not A Believer You're Saying To Yourself Well It's Typical You Expect Better Of The Lord's People Than To Sin At Any Cost To Sin In Any Way Or In Any Shape And Form Let Alone To Sin In This Dreadful Way But It's Hard If You're A Believer To Try And Ask The Question Well

We Know It Happened We Know The Events Came About We Know What Peter Did But We Don't Know What Exactly Stimulated Down This Path You Know If You Read Through This Chapter You'll Find That Peter Again You know He's Highlighted He is There In A Most Fabled Position Alongside James And John The Inner Circle Listening To The Prayers And Petitions Of Jesus And You Know I've Often Spoken Of A Teacher That I Had In School And You Know Christians In My Generation Frowned Upon Drama Being Used For Projecting The Gospel But

This Lady She Was A Drama Queen If Ever You Saw One And When She Was Telling You The Story Of The Gospel You Were Following Her Every Step Of The Way Because She Described It In Such Detail And Described The Darkness Of Gethsemane And Described As We'll See Later On The Journey That Peter And John Took To The Open Grave You Could Almost Imagine That You With Jesus Although A stone Stow Away And We Can Say For Sure How Much He Hurt Because Peter Slept And You Point The Finger At Him And You Slept Peter When You Should Have Been Awake Jesus Condemned Him And Said Can You Not Can You Not Watch With Me That Just A While But He Slept So We Can't Really Say How

[ 54 : 48 ] Much He He Hurt Of The Struggles And The Strivings Of The Lord In Gethsemane We Told What They Were Like That He Was Swifiting Great Drops Of Blood As It Were Struggling Coming Up To The Hour Of His Sacrifice Now Peter How Much Was He Aware Of That You Want You Wanting To Open A Door For Peter You Know Listening To This Peter It's Not Any Surprise That You Were That Your Faith Would Take A Battering It's Not A Surprise If You Began To Doubt At That Moment For You You Were Listening To This Christ That You Followed Around And You Were Hearing Say To God Father If It Be Your Will Take This Cup Away From Me You Don't Know We're Not Told But

We Do Know That At The Point That You Would Expect And I Would Expect And Peter Would Expect To Be Adhering Most Closely To The Lord That He Declared As His Own That There Was Distance Between Him And Christ At That Moment You Know Some People Accus Peter Of Fear The Accusing Of Being Afraid And Yet In The Garden I Don't Know How Many Soldiers There Were I Don't Know How Many Came To Arrest Jesus But We Are Told That One Of The Disciples Took Out A Sword And Went At Him And Hacked The Ear Of One Of The Servants Of The High Priest That Was Peter He Wasn't He Wasn't Afraid He

Wasn't Fear But He Was Ready To Die He Said It And Yet When The Same Night How Can It Possibly Be The Same Person Is Being Accused Of Being Afraid And It Was Fear That Made Him Draw Back From The Lord And It Was Fear That Made Him Stand Outside The Hall Of The High Priest And Was Fear That Made Him Keep His Distance From Christ I Think Think that Is Part Of My Problem And Our Problem What We Know Of Peter What We Understand About His Character That He Was Impulsive That He Was Brash That In Many Respects He Was Immature But Fearless clearly one of the closest allies of Jesus so how can he be found guilty of such a gross sin how can we explain it does it have an explanation does it need to have an explanation it's not just somebody who allows a physical distance to develop between him and Christ but a spiritual distance also an emotional distance I doubt not but I think a spiritual distance you know it's so easy in many respects when you sit back

I've probably said it often when I've been looking at the life of Peter you're like a scientist and you're taking your specimen and you're sitting your specimen on a petri dish and you've got your microscope and you're pouring over it and you're watching all the detail and you're saying well this happened this happened this happened and we're saying why?

you're analysing and you're debating and you're questioning and there's so much that happens that you cannot access you cannot begin to understand how a person who in one moment can fearlessly declare his love for Christ and then in the next deny him how can that happen?

[ 59 : 19 ] is there an explanation for it? well there is one explanation for it and that is the reality of sin and I'm not using that as an excuse I'm not using it in any way to camouflage or cover what Peter did but I want you to understand if you can understand sin at all that you understand it in this place at this time because many of us dispute the reality of sin we dispute the effect of sin we think of sin as just a minor operation and it is none of these things it is something that has the potential to destroy the life and the soul of every individual if it gets a hold if it is not brought under subject under subjection these events are recorded for us just as they took place but I believe if you look at it there is a heavy symbolism he followed but from afar it was a cold dark night and he stood outside and then he went inside to warm himself and it's amazing he didn't go into the corner he went to the heart of the room where the fire was if that's where it was he went into the public gaze because wherever he was at there sin at that point had the mastery of him and it's amazing how quickly that happens if we were to ask Peter if he was here today and you were asking

Peter how did you get from that place you were in when you sat at the at the Lord's feet where you declared your undying love for him where you said so clearly and unambiguously that you were willing to die for him how did you get from there to the place where you were met by a young girl and you denied him remember what Peter said don't overlook it though all men shall be offended because of thee yet I will never be offended I will never be offended I will lay down my life for thy sake he said there are Lord's people here today and they can hang their head in shame and me along with them I will never be offended have you ever said it and yet there are times when you're you're silent when you should be openly critical you say nothing when you should be saying something why?

because you're afraid you're ashamed you're ashamed to be identified with the Lord's people I think at the heart of you know you've got to analyze this and try to understand this and do your best to appreciate what's going on here and I think at the heart of what is happening having been forewarned the declaration that Peter made was made in all honesty and he depended he relied on his own resources he was perfectly confident that the truth that he was saying was perfectly true he believed that he would not deny the Lord that he would not forsake the Lord that he would die for the Lord he believed that and he felt he was in control I don't think there was any point in Peter's life and the kind of person he was that he wasn't in control of all the situations he was in sometimes you would rather he wasn't because of his very impulsive nature but I think at that time he felt he was in charge he knew he knew his own ability but Peter beyond all doubt meant what he said when he said it

Hugh Martin has made an observation I agree with him Peter beyond all doubt he said meant all he said he pretended no love to Jesus which he did not feel he proffered no faithfulness which he did not desire to exhibit he made no promise that he was not anxious to keep and yet like all men Peter was a sinner and like all sinners the best of sinners you can say that is a sinner at best that fact while it is no excuse meant it went the way it did and you can say he messed up badly and when you look at the lives of people be thankful that they're in the Bible be thankful that there are giants of God's making in the

Bible and they messed up and that their story is told not because they made a mess of things you're not glad because of that but because their story is told and that recovery for them is possible that they are able to be restored to the place that was once theirs regardless of how badly they went wrong and maybe rightly so and it should be a lesson to us a warning to us to live our lives in the sight of

[ 66 : 17 ] God so that the sin that we fall prey to do not gain the publicity that would bring shame upon ourselves upon the Lord's people if you were to give Peter the opportunity to live his life over do you think he would do the same things again here's a difficult one do you think he would do the same things again well in one respect Peter if he had the opportunity to see what he learned from his mistakes I've said it often I listen to the politicians to say well let us learn from this and move on hopefully they did but Peter was one such and his mistake was a glaring one I can't imagine what it was like for Peter you can imagine

I suppose a forlorn and a broken figure he had just denied his lord with an oath and a curse and right at the heart of his experience he heard the cock crew and when he heard the cock crew crow he heard Christ speak to him he heard Christ speak to him that moment can't be replicated the moment the voice of Christ came through this voice of this bird because Christ had told him this is how it's going to be because we know that instantly at that moment he thought he heard Christ speak to when he thought thereon he wept Matthew tells us he wept bitterly he wept bitterly it went through him to the very heart now if any of us had been treated by

Peter the way the Lord was be honest how would you be towards him how would you be towards Peter you know this is a difficult thing for the church when one of the body of Christ sin when they commit a wrong how ready are we to forgive how ready are we to understand well if we can understand where they went wrong how ready are we to receive them back to the fellowship often it's with many misgivings and we look down our noses at those who have done wrong and we'll remember their wrongs we'll say well they can come back but not to the intimate fellowship that they enjoyed before they left what does

Christ do what does Christ do with regard to Peter well we're told what he does he seeks him out he identifies him as somebody who has sinned and who understands where he is because of his sin and when an angel came to speak to the ladies at the graveside when the resurrection had taken place the angel spoke to them go and tell the disciples and Peter let them know the Lord is risen indeed and then we read later on of his personal interview with Peter and he needed the special direct intimate attention of the

Lord to probe where he must felt that he had betrayed the Lord his love three times he says to Peter do you love me do you love me do you love me when you deny the Lord and you realize that's what you do does it not instantly threaten the reality of your love you may have a personal conviction that Christ loves without equal he loves without measure his love is without bounds his love will be constant but that doesn't mean that you don't question your own that you're not afraid that it wasn't genuine if it was genuine you wouldn't have sinned if it was genuine you wouldn't have gone away if it was genuine it wouldn't have gone cold if it was genuine you wouldn't been outside if it was genuine you wouldn't have denied him do you not think

[ 72 : 15 ] Jesus knows that. And we're thankful to God that this is not a place where he chooses to hide things away.

But that he exposes it, brings it to light. Because he knows what kind of people we are. He knows that we're sinners.

He knows that when we sin we don't sin to order. Sometimes we sin in ways that we would never have ever imagined in our lives.

Sins that we never that we were never guilty of in the days of ignorance. When we didn't know the Lord these sins were far from us.

We would never have considered that we would fall prey to them. So how come that somehow some of us will do that?

[ 73 : 17 ] Well never forget the power of sin. But more importantly never forget the power of Jesus Christ to cleanse the sinner from every sin.

If you expect to go to the day of judgment carrying your sin with you woe betide you. But if you're a sinner saved by grace you know where to take your sin.

On your knees you go to Christ and you confess him and you seek forgiveness for them. Be assured that forgiveness is his to give and he is not unwilling to be stowed on any who seek it.

Peter went on to be an apostle a witness to the truth. He was crucified we are told because of his witness and testimony to the Lord.

He wasn't ashamed of him that day. Not one of us knows what we will do before this moment and the day we close our eye in death.

[ 74 : 30 ] Not one of us. May God spare us adding to the grief of his church here in this world. May God spare us from bringing shame on his name.

May God spare us from ever having to suffer the darkness of soul that Peter had. But always remember that we must be able to go back to him and to yield ourselves to his compassion.

May he bless his word to us. Let us pray. O Lord of God we pray for your word to draw us into the presence of Christ that Christ who is always pleased to receive us to himself cleanses from sin in his name.

We bless you in him. Amen. Our closing Psalm 61 Psalm 61 O God give ear unto my cry and to my prayer attend from the utmost corner of the land my cry to thee I send what time my heart is overwhelmed and in perplexity do thou me lead unto the rock that higher is than I.

Verses 1 to 4 of Psalm 61 O God give ear unto my cry. O God give ear unto my cry unto my prayer attend from the utmost from the utmost corner of the land my cry to thee I sendou what Thou didn't let me see Till Thou may reach unto the rock

[ 76 : 49 ] The tireddest of night For Thou hast for my refuge been Thou shalt survive thy path And for defense of His my force Thou hast been as long tired Within Thy chopper knock the light Forever will abide And undercull over

Toe my wings With more vengeance behind May the grace, mercy and peace The God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit Rest and abide with you all, never and always Amen Go to ■ ■■uter God in Heaven Amen Every■■■