

Peter's Denial

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[0:00] Good morning. I'm Steve Taberski. I'm not the pastor here.! I'm just a guy.

For those of you who are visiting, we have several of us that speak on occasion.! We have no pastor on staff.

We have wonderful pastors that just donate their time. To serve the Lord. And we as just layman guys feel very honored to be able to stand up in front of you and proclaim God's word.

So don't expect a pastor-type sermon. Just a guy up here talking to you about God's word. Just a guy. For the next three hours or so, I'm going to open God's word to you.

Just a guy born again and filled with the Holy Spirit. And send out and proclaim the word. Go for it, man. Proclaim the word. That's what I'm going to try to do today. And it won't take three hours.

[1:07] It doesn't take me long to tell you everything I know. So we're going to get it. Let's pray. Father, I thank you for the opportunity to stand before people that you love. People that you died for.

People, Lord, that you were thinking about when you were on the cross. I pray, Father, that you visit us today.

Grab a hold of our hearts, Lord, and shake them up. Help us, Father, to see you in a new light. And help us, Lord, to see each other in a new light. Because, Lord, you love all of us.

We should love everyone, too. In Jesus' name, amen. So I don't have any slides. So you're going to, if you're going to read the scripture, or you can listen to me bumble through reading the scripture.

Because I'm going to read a lot today, because I've got John chapter 18, 12 through 40. And I'm going to read it all to you, because it is God's word.

[2:12] But I encourage you to look it up in your own Bible and follow along with me. We had a young fellow. He's not here today. He came to me one day after we had the sermon.

And he was questioning. He said, I've got this Bible. It's the King James Version. And it's got these big letters. And he showed me everything.

And I said, that's a nice Bible. He said, but what he was reading up there, it wasn't the same as what I had in here. And I explained to him that there are different versions. They basically say the same thing, but in a little bit different words.

And he said, oh, okay, I understand now. He's, I think he's slightly autistic, this young man. But anyway, today I'm using John's version.

Because I haven't done that before for John, I don't think. I was going to do the King James Version for the sake of that young man, but he's not here.

[3:19] And when I tried reading it out loud, it's kind of hard to make it flow good, the King James.

It's just because the words are different. So I'm going to use John's version. But let me bring us up to speed here. For those of you who haven't been here, we're going through the book of John.

And we just got through the part where Jesus was in the upper room with his disciples. And he gave them instructions. He knew that the time was at hand. It was time for him to be betrayed and to be crucified.

And he gave his disciples these final instructions of what's going on. And it was heavy stuff for them. They became very troubled because he told them that I'm going to go away.

I'm not going to be with you. But I'll be with you again. And he told them that one of them was going to betray him. And they were troubled about that. And he told them that Peter, of course, Peter was Peter.

[4:23] He said, Peter, he's like, I'll never betray you. He said, if everyone else falls away, not me, Lord, I'll go to you to the death.

And Jesus said, Peter, you're going to deny me three times before the cock crows, before the rooster crows. You're going to deny me three times. And, of course, Peter, I'm sure, thought that's crazy.

That'll never happen. But after Jesus finished his instructions to the disciples, he took them all to a garden.

Now, John leaves out a lot of stuff. You have to go to the other Gospels to see, to get the full story. And even then, even if we take all the Gospels, you're still not getting the full story.

Because one of the things John says at the end of John is that Jesus did many other things. So much so that if it were written down, I suppose the world couldn't contain the books.

[5:24] So we've got a lot of information. And we can get pretty close to the full story looking at it. And I'm going to try to bring some of that in as we go through John and talk about it.

But up to this point, John never says that it was the Garden of Gethsemane. The other Gospels say it, name it the Garden. John doesn't talk about Jesus being in agony because he was under such stress knowing that what was about to happen to him.

Even though he was God, he was still a man. He was still going to suffer. He knew that suffering was going to be bad. And he asked three of his disciples to come away from him.

I was listening to this guy. I talked to Matt about him, Joby Martin. He's a pastor of 1122 Church in Florida. He said, you know, Peter, James, and John, those were his favorites.

But he says, I really think that maybe God couldn't really trust them that good. Jesus couldn't trust them. So he's like after the meet and he says, okay, you guys sit around, you know, maybe write some praise songs, do this.

[6:43] And I'm going to go over here. He said, oh, Peter, James, John, y'all come on, get in the truck, let's go. And because he couldn't trust them. But I think that those three were special disciples to him, special people for him.

And he told them, he says, I'm in great sorrow even unto death. Come and watch and pray with me. So that's kind of a lesson for us.

You know, don't try to handle things on your own. You've got brothers and sisters that can help. If the Son of God, God Almighty felt like I'm going to ask these people to come along with me, come alongside of me and pray with me.

How can we as people expect to be able to handle things on our own? That's just a little nugget in there. So, of course, he takes them with him.

And then Jesus goes off on his own. And he falls down on his face. And he says, Lord, if there's any way that this cup can pass from me, please let it.

[8:00] If there's any other way, Lord. He didn't want to go to the cross. He was trying to get out of it. But if there was any way, please let it pass from me.

And then he goes back to see his three friends to see what's going on. You know how things going all right with you. And what are they doing? They're asleep. Well, that's a lot of help, isn't it?

They're sleeping. It says that they were sleeping because of the sorrow they had just. It wore them out. All the stuff that God, that Jesus had told them, they just wore them out.

And they were sorrowful and they were sleeping. And Jesus woke them up. And he even spoke straight to Peter. He says, Peter, can't you watch and pray with me for one hour?

And he leaves them again and prays the same thing. Lord, if this cup can pass from me, please let it. But not my will, your will be done.

[9:02] And he comes back and the disciples are asleep again. This time he just lets them sleep. And he comes back a third time and they're still sleeping.

And that's when it was time for Judas to come and betray him. He said, come on, let's go. The time has come. So that brought us to Mr. Matt's sermon last week where he, the soldiers came and were taking Jesus.

And what did Peter do during that time? He pulled a sword. Of course, Peter's going to show Jesus something. See, I told you, I'm with you, bud.

I got you. I got you back. And Peter, being the expert swordsman that he was, read a death strike and ended up just slicing the guy's ear off.

And what was that guy's name? Malchus. John's the only gospel that tells us that it was Malchus, that his name was Malchus. And what did Jesus do?

[10:12] He healed him. He told Peter, kind of rebuked Peter, but put the sword away. Put the sword away. Am I not, I'm going to drink the cup that the Father has given me.

So then Peter touches Malchus' ear and heals him. And what's interesting is Malchus continued to be part of the arresting team.

I'd be like, if Jesus did that for me, I'd be like, hey, guys, I'm switching teams. I'm on team Jesus now. If he can do this, I'm on his team. We don't know whatever happened to Malchus.

Maybe he was converted because we know a lot of the, some of the Sanhedrin and all that was converted. And Malchus, maybe that's why John mentioned his name because other Christians knew.

Oh, yeah, Malchus. I don't know. But that brings us to verse 12. And that's where I'm going to start reading.

[11:13] John 18, verse 12. I woke up this morning with a catch in my back. And I can't take a deep breath.

So if I pass out up here, it's because I have, it's a lack of oxygen. That's why I was, I love to sing. And, you know, when you sing, you just get out of breath. So I'm sitting over there trying to, I want to take a deep breath, but that catch in my back stops me.

So anyway, reading causes me to have to take deep breaths too. So if you see me fall out up here, just hold on. I'll get back up in a minute. Yeah, I tried.

I tried. Okay, 1812. Then the squad of soldiers with their commanding officer and the officers of the Jewish leaders arrested Jesus. And tied him up.

They brought him first to Annas. For he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year. Now it was Caiaphas who had advised the Jewish leaders that it was to their advantage that one man die for the people.

[12:20] Now I want to stop there. It's interesting that Caiaphas, the high priest, and he was the one that was seeking to kill Jesus, would say something like this because it sounds very prophetic.

It sounds like, well, he understands what's going on. But what he was saying, we learned back in chapter 11, is that because Jesus was doing so many miracles and causing such a disruption among the people, and people were following him and everything, they're saying, the Sanhedrin's got together and said, what are you going to do with this guy?

We've got to do something. If he continues on doing what he's doing, then they're going to take our place away and our nation. He's talking about the Romans. The Romans are going to destroy us. So Caiaphas was talking about, well, it's better just to kill him than the whole nation will be saved. But he didn't realize what he was saying, that it was the truth.

Okay, and then 1815, it says, Simon Peter and another disciple followed them as they brought Jesus to Annas. Now, the other disciple was acquainted with the high priest, and he went with Jesus to the high priest's courtyard.

[13:41] But Simon Peter was left standing outside by the door. So the other disciple who was acquainted with the high priest came out and spoke to the slave girl who watched the door and brought Peter inside.

We don't know for sure, but we believe that other disciple who knew the high priest or was acquainted with him was John. So John went in and talked to the servant girl, and hey, I'm vouching for this guy, Peter.

He can come in. So Peter got to come inside the courtyard there. Verse 17, While this was happening, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and about his teaching.

Jesus replied, I have spoken publicly to the world. I always taught in the synagogues and in the temple courts where all the Jewish people assembled together.

I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard what I said. They know what I said. When Jesus had said this, one of the high priest's officers who stood nearby struck him on the face and said, Is this the way you answer the high priest?

[15:23] Jesus replied, If I have said something wrong, confirm what is wrong. But if I spoke correctly, why strike me? Then Annas sent him, still tied up, to Caiaphas, the high priest.

So, Jesus was before Annas. Now, what we're going to see here, and John doesn't cover it.

We have to use the other gospels. Jesus actually went through six different trials. Annas was the first trial. You see, it wasn't a very long trial.

He asked Jesus to incriminate himself. Tell me about your disciples, because I want to know who your accomplices are, and tell me what you've been saying, so that we can use it against you. Now, Jesus, of course, knowing that this is an illegal trial, because you never, in the Jewish law, you never have a trial, number one, in the middle of the night, and number two, you always bring witnesses.

[16:25] You don't bring. So, Jesus was kind of prodding him along. Well, you know Annas, where are your witnesses? But, Annas, you know, kind of squelched it right then, and sent him to Caiaphas.

Okay, while that was happening, oh, and by the way, we know that Peter was able to see Jesus at some point in this.

We don't know the complete layout or architecture of the way it was, the buildings were laid out, but we know that later on, spoiler alert, Peter does deny him the third time, and that's when Jesus looks at him, and Peter can see him.

So, it's very possible that Peter could see him when that soldier struck him. And can you imagine, I mean, that's his rabbi.

That's the one that he's been following for three years. He's the one that they were hanging all their hope, and this guy, he's the Messiah. And to see him bound and struck, must have been a pretty big blow for Peter there.

[17:47] Okay, so anyway, meanwhile, Simon Peter was standing in the courtyard warming himself. They said to him, you aren't one of his disciples too, are you? Peter denied it.

I am not. One of the high priest's slaves, a relative of the man whose ear Peter cut off, said, did I not see you in the orchard with him?

Then Peter denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed. And we're going to come back to that, but he, some of the other gospels say that on this third time, Peter didn't just deny it.

He started cursing. He said, I don't know the guy. Peter. So that was, John doesn't cover then the third trial with the Jews.

After Caiaphas, it was early in the morning, they brought all the Sanhedrin together, and at that point, they brought witnesses. And the gospels say that the witnesses, although they witnessed things, none of them agreed with each other.

[19:08] It was, it was, it was useless information. It wasn't until Jesus said that, you know, you know, I am, and you'll see the son of man standing at the right hand of God in the clouds, and that's when they were like, they rent their clothes and said, oh, blasphemy, blasphemy, we don't even need any of these witnesses.

Get them away. He's, he's, uh, deserving of death. So they, that's when they took him to Pilate. So there were three Jewish trials, trials, and now we're going to see the first of three trials that he was under, under the Romans.

Then they brought Jesus from, uh, from Caiaphas to the Roman governor's residence. They took him to Pilate's house. Now it was very early in the morning.

So here they are at Pilate's house early in the morning. I don't know if they had to get him out of bed or whatever, but Pilate comes out. They wouldn't go in.

It says, they did not go into the governor's residence so they would not ceremonially defile themselves because, so that they could eat the Passover meal.

[20:28] How hypocritical, how ironic is that? They're, they're ramrodding a death sentence trial to this guy, but they don't want to go in and defile themselves with some Gentile, being in some Gentile's house and make themselves ceremonially unclean so that they can, uh, participate in their most sacred feast.

Just interesting. So because they wouldn't go in, verse 29, so Pilate came outside to them and said, what accusation do you bring against this man?

and they, listen to them in their, in their, uh, what's the word? Piety or, or whatever.

They replied, if this man were not a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you. So here he wants to know, he's, he's supposed to be the judge and I want to know what the, what the charge is.

And they're like, don't worry about the charge. We, we say he's guilty so just do your job. Pilate told them, of course, I can imagine he was a little bit ticked off at this.

[21:44] I would, I would be. I mean, he, he's like the governor. And he, Pilate told them, well, take him yourselves and pass judgment on him according to your law.

The Jewish leaders replied, we cannot legally put anyone to death. This happened to fulfill the word Jesus had spoken when he indicated what kind of death he was going to die.

See, if, if he was going to be executed by the Jews, what kind of, uh, execution method would they use? Be stoned. But Jesus had said early on that he was going to be crucified.

And, that is purely a Roman form of judgment. So, uh, uh, Pilate, you know, told them, uh, you know, just take him yourselves past judgment.

And then, of course, they said, well, we can't, we've already done that and he's supposed to die.

We can't, we can't kill him legally. You guys won't let us kill people. Verse 33, so Pilate went back into the governor's residence, summoned Jesus and asked him, are you the king of the Jews?

[23:00] Jesus replied, are you saying this on your own initiative or have others told you about me? Pilate answered, I am not a Jew, am I?

Your own people and your chief priest handed you over to me. What have you done? Jesus replied, my kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my servants would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jewish authorities.

But as it is, my kingdom is not from here. Then Pilate said, see, you are a king. Jesus replied, you say that I am a king for this reason I was born and for this reason I came into the world to testify to the truth.

Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice. Pilate asked, what is truth? Pilate was a politician.

We all know truth for politicians on a sliding scale. It's whatever is going to get them, whatever is going to get them their votes or their confidence of the people.

[24:10] It's interesting to me to watch the times that we're in with the elections coming up. and it depends on who they're talking to as to what their message is.

And it could be contradictory, but it's truth for those people, so it's truth for me. It's truth for these people, they don't agree, but it's truth for me. So Pilate's like, what is truth?

when he went, when he had said this, he went back outside to the Jewish leaders and announced, I find no basis for accusation against him.

In other words, I find no fault in this. There's some of the, I find no fault with this man. Then he gives them a choice.

He says, but it is your custom that I release one prisoner for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews? Then they shouted back, no, not this man, but Barabbas.

[25:17] Now Barabbas was a revolutionary. Other, other gospels tell us that Barabbas was a robber and a murderer. As a matter of fact, the two other people that were crucified with Jesus were accomplices of Barabbas.

So that third cross that Jesus was on was set for Barabbas and, of course, the people. The other gospels tell us that it was the chief priests who were egging the people on to say, no, we want Barabbas.

And the other gospels also show us that he actually gave them a choice between Barabbas and Jesus. I guess he knew that they would never want Barabbas released, but the chief priests wanted.

So I want to go back now and talk a little bit about Peter. Before I do that, I want to talk about some songs. Steve is the song guy.

There are some songs that we sing that are kind of, some of the words are like a pet peeve of mine. I don't like them. And one of them is a Christmas song.

[26:40] Do you hear what I hear? And in that song, there's a sentence in there that said, a child, a child shivers in the cold.

Let us bring him silver and gold. And that always bothers me. Why would you bring silver and gold to a child that's shivering in the cold? Why don't you bring him a blanket? So every time I hear that, but I know that the songwriters, you know, they knew that he brought him gold, so what rhymes with gold?

And they're all probably brainstorming and cold, yeah, hey, yeah, let's use the word cold. And then they come up with that verse. But I don't know. I would love to have seen them use a different word.

But that always bothers me. Every time I sing it, I'm like, that's silly. And there's another song. That we sing. All of a sudden the title has, how deep the Father's love for us.

How vast beyond all measure that he would give his only son to make a wretch his treasure. And then it goes on in that song it says, talking about Jesus on the cross, and it says, it was my sin that held him there until it was accomplished.

[27:58] And I always think, that sounds like he had no choice. My sin held him there. And I think it was his love that held him there for me.

In Hebrews it said, it really answers what held him there. It says, and for the joy set before him he endured the cross. What is that joy?

Well, the joy of doing the Father's will. You know, he said, not my will, but thy will be done. And by the way, I've already said that he ended up, for those of you who don't know, he ended up going to the cross.

Even though he prayed, Lord, if there's another way, if there's another way, could you, let's just do that so I don't have to drink this cup. But he had to go to the cross, which tells me there is no other way.

If you're, if you're banking on getting to heaven because of your good works or because of your associations or because of how generous you are, there is no other way to get to heaven.

[29:03] It's only through the death of Christ, accepting his sacrifice for your sin. That is how you get forgiveness of your sin is through the cross and accepting the blood of Jesus Christ in your stead.

Jesus died for you. If there was any other way, then his death would have been useless.

So that's the only way. So, and I'm wondering that this is the joy set before him. I think that we might be part of that joy because he's looking beyond.

He's looking for the joy set before him. That means the joy that's in the future, the joy that's ahead.

And Jesus was willing to endure the cross because he saw big Mark in heaven.

He saw John Howard in heaven. And the only way they were going to be there is because of his, what he's doing for them on the cross.

[30:20] Are you part of his joy? Are you going to be the one that rejects him and says, I'll take my chances.

I'll get there another way. I'll get to heaven. You can be sincere in what you're thinking, but you can be sincerely wrong. Jesus, there is no way.

He said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me. It also says in Acts that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

There is only one way to get to heaven. So, there was a third thing that I wanted that's a pet peeve of mine.

And really, it's probably the Lord might need to talk to me about that. But the Lord's prayer, the Lord's prayer, I learned as a kid, our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

[31:25] Those of you who know it, repeat it with me. Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

That is the part that bothers me. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Or forgive us our trespasses in like manner as we forgive those.

I don't want that kind of forgiveness. Because we don't really forgive a lot of times, do we? We say we do, but we don't.

We harbor it inside. You know, Jesus denied, I mean, Peter denied Jesus three times. And Peter fell asleep when God asked him to pray with him, watch and pray.

And I'll guarantee you, Jesus never said to Peter, Peter, remember that time that I asked you to watch and pray. And you slept.

[32:45] Remember the time, Peter, that you denied me three times? Three times, Peter, you knew I was in a bad place. And you denied me. Boy, that really hurt me, Peter. I can't get over that.

Jesus never said those words to Peter, I'll guarantee you. But yet, how many of us, even though we say we forgive someone for something, we, years later even, you have an argument.

And what comes up? That same old thing that's been forgiven four or five times, it keeps coming up. So those words of forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us?

I would much rather say, Lord, help us to forgive others as you forgive us. Jesus, when he forgives, he forgets.

Not because he is causing himself to be finite or to have some kind of limitation. He doesn't forget that we did that.

[33:59] He never forgets that Peter, but he never holds it against him again and it never gets mentioned again. Once he forgives, it's over. He says, I put your transgressions as far as the east is from the west.

Oh, that we would forgive like Jesus. It says in the other gospels that when Peter had denied him the third time and immediately the cock crowed and he looked and caught eyes with Jesus.

Jesus looked at him. It says that Peter then went out and wept bitterly. John doesn't tell us that, but the other gospels do.

He went out and wept bitterly. It says that Jesus looked at him and Peter remembered what Jesus had said about him denying him.

He went out and wept bitterly. So, I'm trying to put myself in Peter's shoes. Why? Why did he weep bitterly?

[35:12] Is it because he was embarrassed? I told him I wasn't going to do that and I did it. It's because he realized I just let my rabbi, my savior, my God down.

Keep in mind, Peter was really sleepy when all this started because he was trying to get some sleep and then of course the soldiers came and now he's in the courtyard watching everything, not sleeping, so you know how you are when you're tired, you're going to get emotional sometimes, but it also causes you to think.

Peter was able to think that I really messed up this time and he was sorrowful he was crying over that.

Perhaps he was crying because none of this should be happening. This is our Messiah, this is the one that's going to make everything right.

It doesn't make sense that this is happening right now because I'm sure that's a very sorrowful for him. I think Jesus looking at him and remembering was just the straw that broke the camel's back, really.

[36:42] It's just all of these things and I was thinking man, I was sleeping while he was praying. he asked me to pray. Maybe he thought back about the time I was able to walk on water and then I started sinking and he said to me, why did you doubt all you of little faith?

Man, I let him down then. Perhaps he was thinking about the time that Jesus was telling his disciples about his impending crucifixion and everything and Peter says in the Bible that Peter rebuked him.

He's like Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, come over here. You can't be talking like that. And Jesus said, get thee behind me, Satan.

Boy, I really let him down. Can you imagine the Son of God, the Almighty calling you Satan? Think that's going to take some counseling to get over? that.

But I'm sure, you know, all these things were going through Peter's mind and it just caused him to be very sorrowful and weep. And Peter thought that it's over for me. What am I going to do now?

[38:00] It's over. But God, Jesus, and we're going to see in future things, Jesus deliberately called for Peter, deliberately said, tell Peter I'm here.

And he made breakfast for Peter one morning and Peter and the disciples and he talked to Peter. Peter, do you love me? And for three times, maybe it's sort of like the three denials, I don't know, but Peter, do you love me?

you know I do, Lord. Feed my sheep. God wanted to use Peter. Peter thought it was over for him. He had already gone back fishing.

Thought it was over for him. And folks, that's a lesson for us. If you think that you have messed up so bad that God can't use you again, just like Peter thought, then you need to realize that there's nothing that you can do that he can't forgive you for.

The thing is, you gotta forgive yourself too. You can't keep looking at your own failures, your past failures, and let that take control of the rest of your life.

[39:24] It's time to get up and get going. God can use you. He has a knack for using weak people.

And if you think, if it keeps coming to your mind that I failed here, I failed there, I'm no good, that's not God telling you these things. That's Satan, because Satan wants you to live a defeated life. He's bringing that stuff to your mind so that you can feel defeated and useless but God, God, luckily you're not defined by what you think.

You're defined by what God thinks. And if the, if I heard one guy say if, if the, if the tomb is empty, then anything is possible. You can, God can use you.

God can do what he says. if there are things in your life that you wish, well, I really failed someone, I really failed my loved one, I just wish I could go in their mind and erase it so that it's gone.

[40:32] Unfortunately, as people, we can't, we do it, we have to deliberately, God, God, because it's in his nature, is going, he can do what he says. I'll put your transgression as far as the east is from the west.

We, on the other hand, like I said, we kind of harbor it and bring it back. And when you harbor that and you let it sit there in your mind, then you have a tendency to look for other ways that that person is going to fail me.

Because you always think that. And what that can do to you is cause you to live a bitter, fruitless life.

Forgive others. That's what the whole thing is about. The only reason Jesus died on the cross is so that we can have forgiveness.

Forgiveness of the sins that we deserve death for. Jesus took it for us. Now let's forgive others. Let's try to forgive as God forgives.

[41:40] let's pray. Lord, I thank you for your great forgiveness. I thank you, Lord, that it's obvious that you were in 100% control of the whole situation, Lord.

from the time that you made the soldiers fall down when you said I am to the time on the cross, Lord. You laid down your life.

You said that no one takes my life from me. I lay it down willingly. And you did it for the joy set before you. Lord, we know that at any moment you could have decided, you know, I'm not, it's too much, it hurts too much.

I'm coming off this cross and I'm calling my angels to wipe these people out. But Lord, it was your love that held you there and it was the joy of it knowing that you were going to have me with you in paradise.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you. In Jesus' name, amen.