

<p>The single greatest gift of God is forgiveness. Without forgiveness there's no salvation, no reconciliation, no spiritual life, no victory over death or hell. Exodus 34:6,7; Micah 7:18; 1 John 1:7-9. Peter's denial is often looked at as a great tragedy. But it is also a great encouragement to us about our Father who corrects us and whose mercy is never ending.</p>		
<p>PT. 1 - This account is a sobering reminder of the weakness of the flesh.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We've denied Him by not saying or not doing what we should have done. 	<p>PT. 2 - Peter's denial was not spontaneous. He had already laid the groundwork for his defection. (1) HIS BOASTING, cf. Mt. 26:33. He had thought he was strong enough and bold enough. (2) HE WAS INSUBORDINATE. Jesus said he would deny Him, and yet Peter refused to listen to the truth, cf. Mt 26:35.</p> <p>(3) PRAYERLESSNESS. Boating is a sign of not praying and assuming you can handle it. We see this example in the Garden when they couldn't stay awake for one hour. Watch and pray. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.</p> <p>(4) INDEPENDENT - SELF IMPULSIVENESS. Peter didn't want Jesus harmed, but Jesus told them what must happen. (5) HIS COMPROMISE BY ALLOWING HIMSELF TO BE IN A PLACE OF SPIRITUAL DANGER. Yes the Lord delivers His own out of temptation, but willful disobedience is prideful and self centered to allow your way above God's.</p>	
<p>PT. 3 - Following At A Distance. He was "outside" and according to John 18:16 "<i>another disciple</i>" spoke to the guard and let him in. (3A) He wanted to see the outcome even though Jesus told him what it would be. NOTE: We can say many Christians today follow "at a distance."</p>	<p>PT. 4 - HIS DENIAL. How does this relate to us? Galilean (Luke 22:56) was a epithet towards those who were considered "backwards and unprogressive."</p>	<p>PT. 4B (Vs. 69) - Servant-girl. Luke 22:57 Peter says "<i>I don't know Him.</i>" Many bystanders heard this accusation of the girl.</p>
<p>PT. 4C - He was willing to go to war for Him (in the garden) his own plan, but stumbled before a less dangerous girl. He was prepared to battle on his own terms, but not God's. This is why he crumbled here. Watch out for a blind side attack.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peter was like Elijah, strong and bold before 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah, but overcome by fear of what one woman, Jezebel, would do to him. - Peter quietly slipped out hoping no one would see his denial or running away. 	<p>PT. 4D - Hoping to be hidden by the fire (vs. 71), yet another girl noticed, but said to those around her "<i>this man was with Jesus.</i>" Luke 22:58 identifies another man saying the same thing "<i>you are one of them too.</i>"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Like many Christians who know the Bible and go to church, he considered himself complete. - Not only was he denying he knew Jesus, but now affirmed his lie with an oath to add more credibility to his lie. - Peter lost all credibility and seemingly all awareness of God. 	
<p>PT. 4E - Peter's denial became more intense the closer others got to the truth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - While he was still speaking, cf. Luke 22:60, immediately the rooster crowed. - The eye to eye contact with Jesus, cf. Luke 22:61 - This is the moment when we come to the truth of God's word and our actions. What mercy. What grace. 	<p>PT. 5 - Peter's Repentance (Vs. 75). (1) This teaches us that no matter how involved we are with things, we are at risk of denying our Lord. (2) Peter remembered the words Jesus spoke. NOTE: Why some are so calloused to sin is because they don't know what God says. (3) We're not told where Peter went, maybe back to the Garden to pray where he couldn't stay awake to pray before?</p>	

CONCLUSION/APPLICATION: (1) This lesson teaches us about self-trust and our plans aren't king. (2) It teaches us about God's forgiveness and mercy. Simply acknowledging sin doesn't mean forgiveness. In fact, being aware of your sin may drive you deeper, but until you turn and repent your sin remains. (3) It is only here at this place, where you see your heinous rebellion and sin (even as a Christian) and see God as merciful and forgiving. (4) Jesus knew Peter and yet loved him. This event was likely on his mind when he penned 2 Peter 3:17-18.

Exodus 34:6-7, "Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations." **Micah 7:18**, "Who is a God like You, who pardons iniquity And passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in unchanging love." **1 John 1:7-9**, "But if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." **Mt. 26:33**, "But Peter said to Him, Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away." **Mt. 26:35**, "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." **Luke 22:60**, "But Peter said, Man, I do not know what you are talking about. Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed." **Luke 22:61**, "The Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times." **2 Peter 3:17-18**, "You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."