

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

March 2016

John: Jesus is the Christ

Lesson #21: Denials and Trials (continued)

INTRODUCTION

Describe a time when you were caught 'red-handed' in a situation but tried to deny it. What was the outcome?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Note: Peter is not being grilled before a hostile court, or an angry mob. His own fear made a servant girl and another girl hostile monsters in Peter's eyes, and he cowered in fear before them. Peter's sin of denying his association with Jesus grows worse with each denial. First, he merely lied; then he took an oath to the lie, then he began to curse and swear.

Read John 18:15-27. MT: 26:31-35, 69-75

1. How would you describe Peter's attitude in MT 26:31-35? In MT 26:69-75? What caused the change? How do we see ourselves in Peter?
2. Why is it important that Jesus predicted Peter's denials (Mt 26:34)?
3. Why is it significant that Peter denied Jesus a total of three times (versus if it had only happened once)?
4. What is significant about Peter's physical proximity to Jesus during these denials?
5. What can we learn from Peter before, during, and after his denials? What can we learn from Jesus? How can we apply these lessons in our relationships with others?
6. How is the Bible's authenticity and trustworthiness enhanced by including the account of Peter's denials?
Note: Even though Jesus was questioned, he was not required to testify against himself in a legal Jewish trial. Since he is before Annas, this may have been considered a preliminary inquiry, rather than a trial. Annas' priesthood began in AD 6 but he was deposed by the Romans in A.D. 15. He was still considered by many as the true high priest. The high priest was the spiritual and civic head of Israel. He was also the head of the highest Jewish court (Sanhedrin). The Romans recognized their authority in religious law but capital punishment required Roman involvement.
7. What is Caiaphas' relationship to Annas? John 18:12-13
8. Why did Annas question Jesus?
9. How did Jesus expose the trial as a mockery?
10. How did Jesus show that He is not afraid?

APPLICATION

- What steps can you take this week to help you courageously demonstrate your faith?

We see a significant contrast between Judas (showing apostasy) and Peter (showing backsliding). Apostasy is giving up the truth, as Judas did. Judas was sorry about his sin, but it was not a sorrow leading to repentance. Backsliding is a decline from a spiritual experience once enjoyed. Peter slipped, but he will not fall; his bitter weeping will lead to repentance and restoration.

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