

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 07.30.2023

Peter's Denial and Jesus Trial - John 18:10-27

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

Our story takes place in Gethsemane. Jesus has just been approached by a contingent of Roman soldiers as well as several religious leaders carrying torches, lanterns, and weapons. If nothing else, you've got to admire Peter's boldness here. He was willing to singlehandedly take on hundreds of armed soldiers to defend Jesus. Unfortunately, his bravery outmatched his ability with a sword. When he went to slit the nearest persons throat, he ended up lopping off their ear instead. John tells us the man's name was Malchus. I imagine the man screaming and commotion ensuing as soldiers reached for their swords. In the moments before the fight broke out, something very unexpected happened. John leaves this detail out of his recounting of this story, but Luke tells us that after Peter cut the guy's ear off, Jesus reached out and healed him. Let's get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most from Pastor Daniel's sermon?

Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 18:10-14

1. Why would Simon Peter draw out his sword and cut off someone's ear?
2. What was Jesus' crime? What would they say He was guilty of?
3. Why would Jesus be taken first to the father-in-law of the high priest?
4. When did Caiaphas advise "the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people" (John 18:14)?

Jesus easily could have escaped—whatever they bound Jesus with was not what held Him, but His love for us. They bring Jesus to Annas who is recognized by the people as being the High Priest. This position had become really corrupt and people paid lots of money in order to hold the position. Annas was not a good man. Remember when Jesus flipped the tables over in the temple because they were taking money from the people when they shouldn't be? Annas was the one who owned those tables and provided the directions for the moneychangers to scam people.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 18:15-18

1. How did Peter get access closer to where Jesus was? (John 18:15-16)
2. In your opinion, why did the servant girl ask Peter that question after letting him inside?
3. Why do you think Peter was afraid and denied Christ when it was just a servant girl at the door asking him if he was a disciple of Christ?

“PROMISES” in 2023

4. What do you think Peter was feeling and thinking as he warmed himself by the fire?

AS A GROUP READ JOHN 18:19-27

1. What specific questions might Annas have had for Jesus regarding His teachings? His disciples?
2. Why do you think Jesus responded the way that He did? What did His answer accomplish? What does Jesus' response reveal about His understanding of Annas's authority over Him?
3. What are some of the emotions you think Peter went through during this night? How do you think he felt when it was all over?
4. Have you ever felt like Peter? When? How did you respond when you felt that way?
5. After the resurrection, Peter went back to his old life of fishing (cc. Jn 21:3,15-17). Why do you think he went back to his old life? What might have been going on in his mind and heart? How did Jesus lovingly restore Peter?

Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

Peter's story doesn't end here. It easily could have. But Jesus still had plans for the failure named Peter. In fact, John dedicates the whole last chapter of his gospel to tell us how the Lord restored Peter. That blesses me because if God can use a failure like Peter, then maybe He can use someone like me. We're all Peter. We've all failed the Lord. We've all denied Him. That's not what defines us. What will ultimately define you is how you respond to your failures. It's interesting to compare Peter with Judas. Both men were disciples. Both walked with Jesus. Both men failed the Lord miserably. And after their betrayal, both men went out and wept bitterly and expressed regret. Yet for all the similarities they share, their stories have very different outcomes. After his failure, Peter was restored. Meanwhile, Judas went out and hung himself and was lost forever.

1. How can you know whether your failure was like Judas' betrayal or Peter's denial of Christ? What was the difference?
2. Who is one person in your life who could use their hope restored right now? What can you do in order to help bring that about in them?
3. Peter had to learn to have a moment-by-moment dependence on Jesus rather than dependence on self. What are some patterns of behavior you can develop in your life that will help cultivate that sense of dependence on Jesus?

PRAYER: Dear Lord, thank you for your grace and the example of the apostle Peter. He learned to humble himself and depend on your strength rather than his own. As a result, he was restored to his ministry. Father, may we always maintain a humble attitude before You and seek ways to restore those who have failed. May we learn to be people of grace and may our Group be a place of grace!

***'The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.'* {Lamentations 3:22-23}**