



ARE YOU IN DENIAL?

If you have a pattern of having someone share their *Story of Faith* (life before Jesus, encountering Jesus, life since/lately with Jesus) and/or sharing *Evidences of God's grace*, begin with that, followed by a time of thankful prayer for Christ's work in the individual's life/the grace in your lives.

OPENING COMMENT

Peter, the disciple of Jesus, boldly told Jesus that he would never deny him but would die for Him (13: 37). A few short hours later, Peter had denied Jesus three times. What caused Peter to fail so miserably? What should we do when we fail? And, most importantly, what did Jesus do in response to Peter's failures? The answer to that last question will help us a great deal in realizing what Jesus does in response to ours.

READ THE TEXT: [John 18:15-18, 25-27](#)

¹⁵Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, ¹⁶but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in. ¹⁷The servant girl at the door said to Peter, "You also are not one of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not." ¹⁸Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves. Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself...

²⁵Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, "You also are not one of his disciples, are you?" He denied it and said, "I am not." ²⁶One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?" ²⁷Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Share with each other some of the more memorable Peter moments during the ministry of Jesus, prior to the cross. If there are those exploring faith or new in the faith in your group, paint a picture for them of what Peter was like.
2. Peter was overly confident in himself and that got him into trouble. Why is it important to recognize that believers are weak in and of themselves and that there is great danger in self-reliance? Can you support this biblical theme with the Scriptures?
3. It was argued that prayerlessness is a sign of self-reliance. Would you agree?
4. Peter loved Jesus enough to follow him (at a distance) but was cowardly enough to deny him three times when he was thrust into a crowd of non-Jesus followers. Do you ever evaluate who is influencing who more when you spend time with those who don't believe in Jesus?
5. Study and discuss the difference between Peter's posture and response to his failure and Judas' posture and response to his failure (in any of the four gospels).
6. Read 2 Corinthians 7:10. Apply it to these men and apply it to the way you respond to the sin in your life.
7. If we jump ahead to John 21 we see that while Peter's failure was enormous, the grace of our Lord Jesus was even greater. Dwell on the gospel together as displayed by Jesus in the life of Peter and in your own lives.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately, Peter's denials happened for his good and were recorded for our benefit. Peter's colossal failure helps us see more clearly our own great weakness and Christ's great grace!

SHARE & PRAY

- Share how you can pray for each other in light of this study.
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another, for the areas of growth and grace you are seeking, and the needs among you.

