

**The Denial**  
**Message 04 in the series, “24 Hours That Changed Everything”**

**A. As Jesus was standing before His accusers, Peter was denying ever knowing Him — not once, but three times.**

"Meanwhile, Peter was in the courtyard below. One of the servant girls who worked for the high priest came by and noticed Peter warming himself at the fire. She looked at him closely and said, 'You were one of those with Jesus of Nazareth.' But Peter denied it. 'I don't know what you're talking about,' he said, and he went out into the entryway. Just then, a rooster crowed. When the servant girl saw him standing there, she began telling the others, 'This man is definitely one of them!' But Peter denied it again. A little later some of the other bystanders confronted Peter and said, 'You must be one of them, because you are a Galilean.' Peter swore, 'A curse on me if I'm lying—I don't know this man you're talking about!' And immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Suddenly, Jesus' words flashed through Peter's mind: 'Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny three times that you even know me.' And he broke down and wept." Mark 14:66-72 (NLT)

**Three reasons Peter fell into temptation:**

**1. He relied on his own strength rather than God's.**

"Peter said to him, 'Even if everyone else deserts you, I never will.' Jesus replied, 'I tell you the truth, Peter—this very night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny three times that you even know me.' 'No!' Peter declared emphatically. 'Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you!' And all the others vowed the same." Mark 14:29-31 (NLT)

"If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall." 1 Corinthians 10:12 (NLT)

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

**2. He didn't take Jesus' warnings seriously.**

*(Jesus said)*, "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. So, when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers." Luke 22:31-32 (NLT)

"He *(Jesus)* said to Peter, 'Simon, are you asleep? Couldn't you watch with me even one hour? Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak.'" Mark 14:37b-38 (NLT)

"Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith..."  
1 Peter 5:8-9 (NLT)

**3. He distanced himself from Jesus and tried to blend in with the crowd around him.**

"Meanwhile, Peter followed him at a distance and went right into the high priest's courtyard. There he sat with the guards, warming himself by the fire." Mark 14:54 (NLT)

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."  
Romans 12:2 (NIV)

"Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5 (NLT)

## **B. After His resurrection, Jesus restored Peter.**

"After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' 'Yes, Lord,' Peter replied, 'you know I love you.' 'Then feed my lambs,' Jesus told him. Jesus repeated the question: 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' 'Yes, Lord,' Peter said, 'you know I love you.' 'Then take care of my sheep,' Jesus said. A third time he asked him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, 'Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Then feed my sheep.'" John 21:15-17 (NLT)

### **1. Peter discovered that God's grace is bigger than our worst failures. When we fall, the answer is repentance and returning to Him.**

"Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, 'I will confess my rebellion to the LORD.' And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone." Psalm 32:5 (NLT)

"God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant. So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 5:20-21 (NLT)

### **2. Peter discovered that trials don't destroy faith — they refine and strengthen it.**

"...There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world." 1 Peter 1:6-7 (NLT)

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