

# Peter's Trial

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     so yeah we're going to be thinking about that passage Peter's denial Matthew Mark chapter 14 great passage so I'm just going to pray for us and then we'll have a look at it together Lord Jesus we thank you once again for your word the Bible and we pray this morning that you would speak to us through it we pray that we know you more intimately we pray that we know ourselves more deeply and we pray that you'd edify us we pray that you correct our thinking and we pray that we would be built up in Jesus we ask for this in the name of Christ Amen I don't know well I'm sure you have you've been to a fairground and been in the Hall of Mirrors everybody loves Hall of Mirrors if you haven't been there there's actually or you haven't you want to experience that right at the top of the mile just outside the

Optical Illusions place they've got four mirrors just lined up you can go we've had a laugh at that ourselves just going up there what do you see you see mirrors that make you look short and sort of round in the middle is one way to put it some make you look tall and thin you get a funny sized head or normal head and like really big feet it's just a bit of a laugh isn't it the Hall of Mirrors all those crazy mirrors that they've bent to just have a bit of fun the reality is that we know don't we because we know actually what we look like when we look in our own mirror we know that that's a faulty image we know that it's a faulty reflection of what we're actually like perhaps there's some mirrors we wish were the reflection of what we were like others not so much but we know don't we in those instances when we're looking in those mirrors we know that we're being duped that's what we know we know that we're looking in a faulty mirror the reality is our world and our hearts can sometimes be a little bit like a faulty mirror where they tell us what we're like though they attempt to tell us what we're like not physically but they attempt us to reflect about what we're like on the inside but not tell us the truth they give us a faulty reflection you might say and they present an amazing picture or a different picture of what me and you are like the mirror of the world tells you about yourself what you should think how you should dress how you should act and live and what values to hold that is what as you look into the mirror of the world it reflects and says this is what you should this is what you should value and you're there to compare yourself with the mirror of the world and what it holds up but there's also the mirror that our own hearts tell us about that give us a faulty view of ourselves because the mirror we have of ourselves is the mirror of comparison is comparing our lives to that of other people the comparison mirror in your heart either says

I'm not as good as them over there and when the comparison mirror says that what it leads to is coveting desiring jealousy and wanting what other people have had and feel like you're not measuring up as you compare but that's one side of the comparison mirror the other side is that as you compare is to think that you have everything that somebody doesn't have and so you look down on others you either feel like you're not enough or you look down and think you're better than we use the comparison mirror those we're jealous of and those we look down on we feel either inadequate or superior and probably in most of us a mixture of both what we need is a good mirror a perfect mirror an accurate mirror that tells us what we're like on the inside that we can look into that gives us a true picture a true representation of what we're really like we have one the bible is that mirror god speaks through his word to tell us what we're really like and as we hold up ourselves as we look at ourselves the reflection of ourselves in the bible we see ourselves in hd what we're like on the inside sometimes the picture is better than we thought but yet sometimes it's worse in our reading this morning we see a man who is looking at himself through his own faulty mirror it's peter and he thinks at the beginning of the read of our reading that he's better than he is and just as jesus speaks through his word the bible to us to reveal what we're like jesus speaks words directly to peter and to the disciples of what they're like and how they will act they don't like what they hear to begin with so as we think about those things we're going to look at what peter does on the night before jesus died peter's actions three things we're going to see we'll see peter's pride we'll see peter's denial and then we'll see peter's remorse his pride his denial his remorse before we go there let's just remember where we're at in the last 24 hours of jesus earthly life jesus and as we looked at last week jesus and his disciples have just had one of if not the most intimate moment with their saviour in the upper room they shared the first communion we saw that last week they're singing together sharing the last passover they then take a walk from they must have felt great things and it was amazing what a great meal they'd had a great time of fellowship together they're taking a walk singing with jesus and it's in that moment when jesus lands them with a bombshell verse 27 look with me you will all fall away he gives the reason why for this is this is why it's going to happen because it was written about that it was going to happen you will all fall away for it is written i will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered and that brings us to our first point peter's pride peter's pride peter flatly outright contradicts jesus and not just contradicts jesus but he also has the mirror of comparison and he compares himself to the rest of his friends the disciples he thinks he's a cub of the rest

look at what he says in verse 29 even if all fall away i will not even if all the rest of you guys desert jesus it's not going to happen to me i'm a cut above in the mirror of comparison i know i've got more of what it takes i'm happier with myself and i know i'm a cut above the rest of you they might fall away but it ain't gonna happen to me jesus knows that peter's fall will go even further than the other well the rest of them 11 10 verse 30 truly i tell you jesus answered today yes tonight before the cock crows you yourself will disown me three times peter hears that he's not having a bar of it is he's not having that he insisted emphatically that means it's almost the way that that kind of reads is repeatedly insistently even if i have to die with you i'll never disown you he says you've got it wrong jesus you've made a mistake on this one about me you don't know how strong i am you don't know what lengths i will go for you i'm stronger than everyone else here i would rather die than disown you he is offended he's offended deeply offended but by what jesus is insinuating he hears what jesus said almost as a it's like an offensive accusation and it hurts him how could he say that about me he's wounded by jesus words so he comes out giving it the big i am fighting talk like a boxer trashing his opponent i'm not going to get put down i'm not going to do what you say i'm not going to go down without a fight if they come for you i'll be right there with you jesus you can count on me to stand up to be counted more than anyone else he's offended by what jesus says he's got that inflated opinion of himself and it's pride that's what pride is if you want to know what pride is you just have to look at how peter acts here pride is acting like peter does here it's thinking that we're better than we are it's thinking that we're better than other people it's looking down on others like a high-pitched peacock strutting for attention the reality is there isn't anyone who isn't like peacock peter we might openly strut like him but it comes out in other ways too how does it come out in people's lives i think one of the ways that we might do it subtly not openly like peter here is you think about gossip or you think about it not not even ourselves gossiping but you think about gossip in the world you read a gossip column or an article in the news about how someone has messed up royally and our thoughts turn i i can't believe what they did you'd never catch me doing that you'd just never catch me doing that and then you know you speak to someone who may have heard the same news story and you share with them if you heard what so and so did on the news awful isn't it you can't believe how

far people will stoop these days you'll never catch me doing that gossiping about people's failures what p.o.

- [ 11 : 36 ] teaches us is that if pride can get hold of him somebody who's spent three years with jesus who's ministered who's been anointed and blessed as one of the twelve to do a particular type of ministry seeing jesus and being with him day to day watching him ministering the most perfect character in a very intimate close way if pride can get hold of him and cause him to sin it can get hold of us and lead us to places we never actually thought possible the reason why is pride so sinful what is it about pride the reason pride is sin is because fundamentally at its heart is what is it's the desire for self adulation and worship it's actually the desire for others to worship you instead of worshiping god that's what you're redirecting someone's worship that they should be giving to god and you're saying you should actually just give me the adulation just hear me out on this everyone including me everyone without exception wants to be admired and accepted by other people to be seen as worthy in their eyes and what happens is when we look down on others when we gossip about failure we want the person that we're speaking to that we're gossiping to that we're explaining the gossip to we want that person to hear it and think that we're not like that and it's obvious that we're not like it because we're putting that behaviour down we're not like that we're not that kind of person who would ever do that we want them to have a high opinion of us we want to be worthy in their eyes and deep down we want to take the place of god in their lives itself is the desire to be worshipped by a person

Peter desperately wants Jesus' approval in this moment what does he really want to hear from Jesus he wants Jesus to respond with you're right Peter I'm sorry you're my favourite disciple you're the best one and of course I'm not telling the truth here you're not like that you'll stand with me I know that you're going to stand with me to the end that's what he wants Jesus to say he wants to be built up we want people to have a high opinion of us and even the suggestion that we might not be like that we find offensive we act strongly to it we act strongly against even the thought that somebody might say that that is what we're like

Peter informs Jesus he doesn't know what he's talking about he doesn't know what he's talking about it's an amazing thing when you realise that he contradicts Jesus and tells him you don't know what you're talking about when we realise that there's sin in our hearts when we realise when sin is pointed out it can be easy to think of the person even the person maybe that's pointed out you don't understand what's been going on in my life there's reasons for my sin it's different the reasons behind it I kind of didn't have a choice I just kind of had to do it you don't understand your suggestion you don't know what you're talking about

Peter's pride let's jump up forward to 66 let's jump forward to 66 what we see in this we're jumping forward there's lots of we've got the whole episode in Gethsemane that comes Jesus his trial begins but what you realise as we begin 66 is that in this passage there's actually two trials that happen you've got the trial of Jesus in the Sanhedrin before the religious court but then you've got the second trial that happens in the courtyard Peter is on trial verse 66 well Peter was below in the courtyard he's just below him at the same time as Jesus unfair trial Peter is on trial for his association with

Jesus which is going to bring us to our second point Peter's denial whereas Jesus is prosecuted by a crowd of angry men that have no reason it's an unfair trial based on no evidence Peter is full of an intimidating atmosphere that Jesus is in Peter is prosecuted by a young servant girl who intimidates Peter a little girl who intimidates Peter this young girl you can imagine what happens they're in the courtyard this young girl servant girl we read she sees Peter and she does a double take like I know him first line of inquiry is she spots him you also were with that Nazarene Jesus she says she's seen Peter with Jesus she recognises him straight away everybody knew who Jesus was they recognised who was with him she quizzes him again but notice with me this time she calls for more witnesses to verify her initial observation verse 69 she said again to those standing around this fellow is one of them her first line of inquiry was that she saw him with

[18:00] Jesus her second line of inquiry not only has she seen him with the man who stood upstairs having an unfair trial but she's also seen him with his group of followers one of the twelve again Peter denies it they then pause the interrogation perhaps the bystanders that she's spoken to confer and have to have a little chat about who this man is they come to an agreement before they're back in session verse 69 surely you are one of them for you're a Galilean the third thing is that he has an accent he has a Galilean accent it gives him away but Peter denies again with increasing sort of his reaction increases his response in front of this makeshift jury verse 71 he began to call down curses and he swore to them

I don't know this man you're talking about what's more remarkable about that he's a Galilean Jesus is the most famous man to ever come out of Galilee everyone from Galilee knew who Jesus was in fact you know everyone kind of knows at this time who Jesus was especially in Jerusalem at the time but definitely if you were from Galilee and Peter in this episode he doesn't even use his name he distances himself even further it's clear isn't it what is clear from this episode is Peter does not want to be associated with Jesus it is a public disowning his denial it is a public disowning it's you know you think of what happens when you disown something you take something that belongs to you you look at it and you realise that you don't need it anymore you think this thing that I own is of no use like putting a once loved item in the skip

Peter treats Jesus like he's of no use perhaps Peter still believed Jesus when he got to the Sanhedrin would still engage in some violent messianic tirade there was some sort of holy war about to happen and he was going to overthrow the Romans and all the false leaders Peter wanted to be down there he was ready to die in battle for his name to go down in history as a great leader to be associated with that kind of war king would be glorious to go down imagine he'd love to go down as Peter the warrior but not this kind of king not this humiliation Jesus was going through this was not how you made a name for yourself it's fear isn't it it's fear that drives

Peter's denial is it fear of death does he fear Jesus going to die and therefore he's going to die perhaps I don't know if I buy that I think if there was a big battle going on I think he'd have fought and been ready to die I think the fear is of humiliation fear of being associated with someone who promised much but didn't deliver how Peter anticipated fear of being looked down on fear that if he died his name wouldn't be remembered it would be remembered as someone who was associated with a man who was a humiliated name for the nation forever that his name would be mocked his legacy would be one of humiliation that is still relevant for us today isn't it the fear of humiliation for following Jesus that is still relevant it's the fear of humiliation of losing respect maybe perhaps like of what

Peter feared being looked down on because of our faith by people we like and admire it is unlikely it is unlikely that we'll be put in a position of open denial of disowning of Jesus like Peter is our temptation is much more passive it's the temptation to stay silent about our faith instead of speaking up perhaps forgetting to mention where we are on a Sunday morning and a Wednesday evening when people ask maybe not talking maybe to others when they ask what if we can do something with them on a Sunday morning and perhaps not mentioning that Sunday mornings are off limits because worshipping Jesus takes precedence in our lives you see denying Jesus disowning Jesus is fundamentally a heart problem it's treasuring relationships with others and like

[ 23 : 36 ] Peter his desired status more than he treasures his saviour we're all guilty of doing it the question then and it's heavy stuff don't get me wrong this is heavy stuff it's heavy on our hearts but the question we're left with if it's a heart problem and if we all have this problem how do we respond and where do we go from here we're going to turn to look at Peter's final point Peter's remorse following his denial his disowning of Jesus the rooster the cock crawls verse 72 where are we immediately the cock crawled a second time then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him before the cock crows twice you will disown me three times and he broke down and went

Peter remembers and realises that everything Jesus had said about him not that long ago five six hours was right he's reached rock bottom and he weeps that word for weep can mean to lament to wail and the way that it's written is not just it doesn't just mean to shed a few tears he didn't just sit and shed a few tears to himself it almost means to wail continuously he's bereft and he's weeping uncontrollably wailing into the night he's completely devastated by his actions he can imagine how he feels right how could I do that to my best friend

I've ruined everything how could I do that I'm doomed there's no coming back for me was going through his mind and alongside those emotions that are filling him that as he wails continuously into the night alongside that there's the the burden the weight of his sin what's happened is that his pride bubble has been popped underneath all the bravado and the peacocks strutting Peter's no one better than anyone else he's not as great as he thought and Jesus words earlier that evening were the truth and he realises that that he's not as good as he thought Peter's fall in some ways is necessary for his journey without his fall he'd still be blind to his heart problem he'd still think he was top of the tree now he sees himself and he sees his problem the mirror of what he's really like because of what

Jesus said the realisation that Jesus words were true makes him see himself and his problem with clarity it's like a doctor giving you a report on your health and insight into your physical condition you realise what you need to do and you get a truer picture of where your body's at you see Jesus has had a spiritual report on Peter he didn't believe it but it's now confirmed and the condition of his heart is laid bare and understood this is part the remorse the guilt the shame for the action is part of his journey it's the first step for Peter you know in Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church he writes about this how the emotions that we feel especially he writes to the

Corinthian church they've been full of sin and he notices in them that the church is feeling sorrow for what they've done listen to what he writes to the church he writes for you became sorrowful as God intended God intended for the church to be sorrowful for their sin and he says and so we're not harmed in any way by us and then he writes what's going on he says godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret but worldly sorrow brings death when you have remorse and sorrow because of what you've done it's hard and the emotion of it is difficult but it's not bad if it's godly sorrow if it's genuine sorrow for the way that you've lived against Jesus it is not bad because it leads to turning away from it that leads to your salvation if step one is remorse step two is repentance it is right to feel the weight of it to feel remorse and shame it is right even to feel a sense of guilt and shame for what you've done the difference is

[ 29 : 16 ] Jesus doesn't want to stay in that place it'd be wrong to stay in that place of shame and guilt Jesus doesn't want that he wants to take that shame and guilt away from you he wants to take it away from you and he does that not if you continue to turn away from him but if you turn to him in the midst of the sorrow and the remorse in the middle of it three ways three one way that you can do that just a little thing that I have other people have said this lots of people have gone before how do I think about how to repent three words sorry thank you please to say sorry the remorse of what you've done say sorry to God for your sin to say thank you that the cross takes it away he removes your guilt and your shame and as we said to the kids throws it to the bottom of the ocean and then the third step is please come in and change me to be more like you that's turning from your sin turning to

Jesus and asking part of the repentance means to change to live more like him that is repentance you have stage one is remorse stage two is repentance now as we look at this passage you might think that all we see is Peter's remorse but there is a hint that not only Peter but all the Jesus disciples bar Judas repent and the hint of it comes right at the beginning of our reading turn back to verse 27 look with me remember we just said Jesus says you'll all fall away just as written I'll strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered but verse 28 look what he says he says but after I have risen I will go ahead of you into Galilee you see that in verse 28 Jesus promises that he will see all of them again all of them that are left all of them that are scattered there's powerful good news in these verses you see what we see from these verses is it is God the Father who strikes the shepherd it's God the Father who strikes his own son the shepherd

Jesus Christ it is God the Father who causes the sheep to be scattered why does he want them to be scattered why does he strike the shepherd the shepherd Jesus must be struck alone it's on his own on his own he's the only one who can make the journey to the cross he can't make it with other people because he alone is the only one who can stand as an appropriate sacrifice for the sin of all people he'll be struck down alone he'll receive God's anger alone and God's wrath at sin it's through his death on his own as he is forsaken by God for us however Jesus' resurrection he hints at after I have risen he says I will go ahead of you I will bring restoration the scattered sheep running around in every direction no shepherd in the wilderness terrified on their own not even together themselves all you can you think of sheep without a shepherd and if an angry wolf or a bear came in they would scatter wouldn't they in all different directions they don't act as a group trying to help one another out they scatter

Jesus is gone they totally scatter the terrified sheep here they become a flock again they become a flock again because their shepherd is restored brought back to new life the scattered sheep are gathered together once again people will be part of that flock on that day in Galilee he will be restored and Jesus on that day will have his arms open wide to embrace his best friend he'll embrace it and not only is his relationship restored not only is he forgiven but as we know from the book of Acts Peter goes on to have years of fruitful ministry years thousands come into the family of God are converted through Peter's preaching and ministry in the book of Acts thousands what does this remind us of what does this how does what does this make us think of it reminds us that if you've fallen if you've been humbled if you've sinned if you have been silent about your faith and not stood up because of fear of embarrassment and humiliation if you've sinned in a way that you never thought you could if you felt remorse and repented of that

Jesus not only restores his relationship with you but he still chooses and calls and wants to use you to bless other people you're not a failure and any failure you've made is not the end it's not the end for you Jesus is bigger than any wrong choice you make because he forgives you it's down to the sins down to the bottom of the ocean then he still chooses that you will be the blessing that he will work through you you will be his hands and feet in the world he doesn't cast you off he doesn't think you're useless he forgives and restores you and plans to be at work through you very powerfully in people's lives very powerfully there is restoration restoration from even the worst of sin even the disowning of Jesus there is restoration in relationship but in fruitful ministry there is life from death there is forgiveness why not turn afresh to him today turn afresh to Jesus sorry thank you please know the restored relationship and know that restored way of life that Jesus will bring into your life we started off by talking about that faulty mirror it is good to recognise where we're lying to ourselves and sometimes where the world lies to us but the word of

[ 36 : 52 ] God Jesus Christ never lies to you and his word and the reality of what he tells you is sometimes hard to hear but it is good the remorse that we feel can be painful but it is good because it demonstrates that you're on a journey of turning to him and being restored to being true real relationship with your saviour we will all everyone struggles with pride there's not a single person that doesn't we have all lived that the response to pride is that we've all fallen we have all felt the remorse of the things that we've done we will all know the restoration of Jesus Christ in our lives turn to him afresh today and know the power of his resurrection in your life afresh today let me pray almighty god you're such a great saviour and we know the ways that we've been proud in the past you know the ways that we will be proud in the future and we're sorry for those things and we pray that you'd help us to grow in humility to demonstrate that to be like humble

Jesus I thank you that you love us so much that you want to show us what we're like you want us to be changed part of the journey that we're on when that happens is hard for us to take on board we don't like to be told what we're like we don't like it to be revealed and so I pray that when it is that you'd help us to respond with humility I pray I pray that you'd give us a deepening awareness of ourselves and I pray that as we turn to you we would know the assurance that comes from knowing that you're with us I pray that as we see Peter's fall and subsequent restoration we would know that his pattern is the pattern of life for us too and so restore us once again oh Lord we pray in Jesus name

Amen