

THE DANGER  
OF FOLLOWING  
AT A  
DISTANCE

LUKE 22:54-62

## Matthew 16:13-16

When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Peter seemed to be very confident when he confessed Jesus as the Son of God.

He also seemed very confident in his faith at the last supper and when they came to arrest Jesus.

Mark 14:29

“Even though they all fall away, I will not.”

Matthew 26:33

“Though all men shall be offended because of thee,  
yet I will never be offended because of thee.”

Luke 22:33

“Lord I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to  
death.”

John 18:10

Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and  
struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right  
ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.

Even though Peter confessed Jesus to be “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” and He vowed that he would never leave Him, Jesus predicted Peter’s fall.

Matthew 26:31

“You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written: ‘I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’”

Luke 22:31-32

Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.

Peter Found Himself In A Dilemma.

He was caught between two forces:

Christ

Satan

His conscience said Christ.

Fear said Satan; deny Christ

His decision:

Follow, but at a distance.

Partial service is no service

Jesus wants all or nothing.

Matthew 22:37

Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.”

Matthew 12:30

“He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.”

## What Was The Result Of Peter's Decision?

He followed at a distance, or as the King James says: afar off.

How far?

Only God knows.

This is measured not by feet or yards, but by your attitude.

He had lost the zeal of His confession.

Where was that confession that he so boldly made?

Where was that vow of loyalty?

## Luke 22:55

Now when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them.

Peter found himself with the wrong crowd.

This happens when your not close to Christ.

## I Corinthians 15:33

Do not be deceived: “Evil companions corrupt good morals.”

Peter was cold and indifferent with his accusers.

Luke 22:56-60

And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looking intently at him and said, "This man was also with Him." But he denied Him, saying, "Woman I do not know Him." And after a little while another saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying."

Mark 14:71

Then he began to curse and swear, "I do not know this Man of whom you speak."

## Luke 22:60-61

Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.”

How do you think Peter felt at that moment?

This is the man who confessed Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” first and so forcefully.

He was the one who spoke up and said, “ I will never fall away.

This is the man who had denied Jesus not once, not twice, but three times.

What was he to do?

In Luke 22:62 we read of Peter's redemption:

So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Do you think this is all Peter did?

I think Peter also prayed.

Luke 18:1

Then he spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart.

## II Corinthians 7:10

For godly sorrow produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret; but worldly sorrow produces death.

This is the kind of sorrow Peter had.

What a contrast with Judas!

His was a worldly sorrow.

## Matthew 27:4-5

“I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” And they said, “What is that to us? See to yourself.” Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went out and hanged himself.

HAVE YOU EVER MADE THE  
CONFESSION THAT JESUS IS  
THE CHRIST THE SON OF  
LIVING GOD?

WHEN YOU DO THAT THEN YOU  
CAN START TO FOLLOW HIM  
NOT FROM A DISTANCE, BUT  
FOLLOWING HIM VERY  
CLOSELY.

IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN,  
WHAT ABOUT YOU,  
TODAY?

ARE YOU FOLLOWING  
CHRIST FROM A DISTANCE?

ARE YOU FORGETTING  
ABOUT THAT CONFESSION  
THAT YOU ONCE MADE?

ARE YOU EVEN TO THE  
POINT TO WHERE YOU ARE  
DENYING HIM?

IF SO, THEN IT IS TIME TO  
RESPOND LIKE PETER DID.

HOW DID HE RESPOND?

HE WEPT  
BITTERLY, HE  
REPENTED AND  
ASKED GOD FOR  
FORGIVENESS.

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