



STORIES OF LIFE!

The Gospel of Luke

A Story of Denial!

Luke 22:54-71

Message #68 of 70 – S863

Sermon given on September 29, 2019



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

A Story of Denial!

Luke 22:54-71

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 22**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- Before we get into our text for today
- Many of you know that we have been going through a tough time as a family
- It is never easy to lose a loved one, a mother, grandmother
- Two weeks ago, I shared a message saying that there are things we can do to make the storms of life easier to endure
- One of the things that I said make difficult times easier is **Faithful Friends**
- Sometimes all someone needs during a time like the one we and many others in the church are going through is to experience God's love and care through the faithful men and women He has placed around them
- Kelly and I and the family have been greatly encouraged by the love you, the church has shown us
- 'Thank you' feels woefully inadequate to express how we feel – Thank you.
- Let's pray and then get into our text
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **A Story of Denial!**
- So far in Luke 22 we have seen the Last Supper and Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane
- This morning we are going to look at three accounts
- The first is of a man, Peter, who knows Jesus and knows who He is
Matthew 16:15-16
He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
- The second account is of a group that doesn't care who Jesus is

- The third includes the religious leaders, who should have known who Jesus was based on their own Scriptures – but didn't **Matthew 26:63** **But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!"**
- In all three accounts there is a denial of Christ
- One is because a weakness of the flesh, one is because of ignorance of mind, and the third comes from the willfulness of hard hearts
- There is something we can learn from each account
- Whenever we think about denying Christ, we think of this account with Peter
- And so many have come to believe that denying Christ has to do with how I respond when someone asks me about Jesus
- I am going to try to broaden your vision a little this morning
- Everything in your life either denies or confirms Him to the world
- If you are married, your marriage says something about Jesus
- If you work, how you work says something about Jesus
- How you handle your money, how you relate to the issues of the day, your political views, how you interact with others, absolutely every bit of your life is either denying Christ or is confirming Him
- Let's look at each denial and see what we learn
- The first denial – **A Denial of Weakness**
- **Luke 22:54-55**
- John's gospel tells us that John is there too, though all we know about him in this account is that he got the doorkeeper to let Peter in
- Peter wanted to see what was going to happen to Jesus
- There in the light of the fire, someone stares uncomfortably at Peter
- **Luke 22:56-57**
- Why did Peter deny Christ? Just hours earlier **Matthew 26:35** **Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!"**
- It doesn't seem that this servant girl is much of a threat
- The big fisherman is having a hard time hiding himself
- **Luke 22:58-60**
- Luke includes a detail that is not found in the other three gospels
- **Luke 22:61**
- Jesus may not have heard Peter denying Him, but He heard the rooster crow the second time and Jesus knew exactly what it meant

- As their eyes met, Peter remembered what Jesus had said
- Peter proudly said he would never deny Christ, Jesus said, yes you will
- Jesus had warned Peter that his flesh was weak – that he would fail
- God is bigger than your mistakes, Jesus is stronger than your weakness, the Spirit can bring good out of your failings
- As strong as Peter thought he was – he was weak when it came to spiritual things
- That is an exhortation to watch out for ourselves when we think we are strong **1 Corinthians 10:12**

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

- Something about that look shatters the pride of the boldest of Christ's disciples
- **Luke 22:62**
- Peter was never the same after this
- He was far from perfect, but his flesh had received a mortal blow
- Peter had denied Christ before a servant girl
- Just a couple of months later Peter and John would stand before the Sanhedrin and boldly tell them that Jesus was the only hope of salvation **Acts 4:12**

Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

- Peter's denial came from a place of weakness
- But it was from the ruins of Peter's failure that God built a mighty man of God whom the Spirit used to change the world
- Only God can take the ruined, burned, wrecked, mangled pieces of our weaknesses, failures, and mistakes and make something beautiful and powerful for His glory, the blessing of others, and the growing of faith
- Our second account – **A Denial of Ignorance**
- **Luke 22:63-65**
- Peter knew who Jesus was – the Christ – the Son of the Living God
- These guys are the temple guards and maybe others from the mob who arrested Jesus
- They probably knew something about Jesus – chances are they knew someone who had been healed, or fed, or heard Him teach
- But they didn't care to know who He really was

- To them Jesus was someone they could abuse and mock
- Soon, something or someone else would attract their attention and they wouldn't give Jesus another thought
- Jesus told His disciples that this was coming
- We are shocked at the thought of God Incarnate being abused by His creation, but it was predicted hundreds of years before **Isaiah 50:6**
I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.
- From the earliest pages of the Bible we are taught that a Savior was coming to redeem mankind from its sin
- These men are ignorantly abusing and mocking the Perfect, Holy Servant of God
- That doesn't make them innocent – they are guilty of great sin
- And unless they repented, they would pay a terrible price for what they have done to their Savior
- What these men did, they did in ignorance – not so with the next account – **A Willful Denial**
- **Luke 22:66-68**
- Jesus is standing before the men who considered themselves the spiritual compass of the nation of Israel
- They held positions of the highest authority and power in the nation
- In Matthew 27, it says that Pilate knew that the Jews had handed over Jesus out of envy or jealousy over His influence and popularity with the people
- Jesus is not the Messiah they want – and nothing He says or does is going to change their minds
- They want Him to confess that He is the Messiah so that they can condemn Him
- **Luke 22:69-70**
- I have heard people say that Jesus never said He was God
- You can only say that if you have not read the Bible and understand what it says
- To 'sit on the right hand of the power of God' is an absolute claim of equality with God
- To be the 'Son of God' is to be equal with God
- 'You rightly say that I am' – idiom = 'You said it!' = Yes!

- Their response proves that is what they understand Jesus meant
 - **Luke 22:71**
 - ‘What further testimony do we need?’ – those words will condemn them
 - They have heard the truth from the very lips of the source of truth
 - By willfully denying Christ, they are inviting the full wrath of God
 - And not just upon themselves – they represent the nation of Israel
 - Just a few decades later that wrath fell upon Israel and for two millennia the Jews have been scattered
 - One of the signs that Jesus may be coming back soon is the regathering of the Jews in the land of Israel
 - Three accounts of denying Christ
 - I started by saying that our life either confirms Christ or denies Him
 - Since most of us are probably Christians, and I would imagine that we don’t want to deny Christ – I want to look at Peter’s response to His failure
 - Instead of focusing on not denying Christ – focus on trying to confirm Christ
 - **Luke 22:61**
 - Peter denied Christ just as Jesus said He would
 - After Peter failed – **He Remembered!**
 - One of the keys to confirming Christ is remembering what he said
 - Listen, even the strongest Christians are sometimes weak spiritually
 - And no matter how much you know about God and His Word you don’t know everything – that ignorance will cause you to deny Christ in some way
 - And sometimes, our feelings cause us to do things we want to do, rather than what God wants us to do
 - To confirm Christ – Remember! We do that primarily by being exposed to His Word – Make Bible reading, studying, and sermons a regular part of your spiritual diet **John 14:26**
- But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.**
- The Holy Spirit can only bring to remembrance what we have read, studied, or heard
 - First, Peter remembered!

- **Luke 22:62**

- The next thing Peter did was: **He Repented!**
- Peter looked at Jesus and remembered what He said and then compared that with what he did – and it broke Peter **2 Corinthians 7:10**

For godly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted...

- True repentance always involves a sense of sadness – it should
- When we make a mistake, we blow it, we sin, we are denying Christ
- Whether we did it because of weakness, ignorance, or willfulness
- And the more we look to Jesus, the more we remember Him and what he did for us, the more it should sadden us
- It should bother us when we do or don't do something that is a denial of Christ
- The verse says, 'Peter went out' – he left that place that tempted him to deny Christ
- True repentance also includes turning away from those things that tempt us to deny Christ
- Peter remembered, Peter repented, and later he will do one other thing – **He Returned**
- After Jesus died and was raised from the dead He had a conversation with Peter **John 21:15**

So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs."

- True repentance always brings us back to Jesus
- Remember – Repent – Return
- Here's what will happen – if you practice remember – repent – return every time you blow it – more of your life will confirm Christ
- Don't focus on not denying Christ – focus of confirming Christ with more of your life
- The story of Christ in your life is a good story
- That doesn't mean that everything you do is going to be good, but if you remember, repent, and return, God will make good out of it
- **Pray!**