

Imperfect #8
Deny, Deny, Deny

Word

Scripture Reference

Luke 22:54-65

Discussion Questions

1. How does peer pressure influence your decision making?
2. It's a sad truth that followers of Jesus Christ deny their faith in Him every day by their words and actions. Read Luke 22:54-65 and John 18:15-27. This well-known passages of Peter's denial of Jesus shows us three factors that cause believers to deny their faith in Christ. First is that we deny Jesus because of fear (Luke 22:56-57; John 18:17-18). After His arrest at Gethsemane, Jesus was taken to a high priest's courtyard where He was illegally questioned. Peter followed Jesus there at a distance. At the courtyard, what did the servant girl accuse Peter of being (v. 56)? What was Peter's response? How did the servant girl know that Peter was lying (John 18:17-18)? What impression do you think Peter's denial gave to the girl? What situations might you be tempted to deny knowing Jesus? Discuss how a Christian denies knowing Christ by his/her words, actions or lifestyle.
3. Secondly, we deny Jesus because of pressure (Luke 22:58; John 18:25). It is human nature to give in and conform when opposition gets in the way and we feel pressure being applied to our convictions. With ten other disciples with Him at Gethsemane, Peter was brave enough to fight for Jesus; but at the courtyard, alone, with people chiming accusations at him, Peter experienced pressure. Who else challenged Peter's denial that he was associated with Jesus? How did Peter react to this second allegation (22:58; 18:25)? In what situations are other people able to sway you to act in ways you know you should not? How can you stand up for the Lord despite these pressures?
4. Lastly, we deny Jesus because of identification (Luke 22:59-60; John 18:26). Sadly, a lot of Christians do not want to be identified with Jesus outside of the church because of the implications being associated with Christ brings. Who was the third person that accused Peter of being Jesus' follower (John 18:26)?

If you were Peter, what consequences would you be afraid of that you would deny being associated with Jesus? What "consequences" does a follower of Christ avoid when he/she refuse to be associated with other believers? In what situations (when and where) do you find it very difficult to openly admit your relationship with Jesus Christ? How can you overcome those instances in your life when identifying with Christ is a challenge?

5. While Peter was denying his association with Jesus, it seemed that he didn't feel ashamed doing it. Describe what happened the very minute of the third time he denied his association with Christ (Luke 22:61-62). What do you think Peter saw in Jesus' face when their eyes met? What do you think could he have felt at that moment? How did Peter react to the recognition that he had denied his Lord? What can you learn about repentance from Peter's experience? As a believer in the midst of several other voices, how than should you respond to the compelling voice of God?

Walk

The Lord Jesus Christ's life as Someone who chose to obey God is very different from Peter's. Jesus never wavered, never allowed fear and pressure to cause Him to deny His identity as the Son of God and our Savior. He never denies us despite severe consequences (Luke 22:63-65). Would you do the same for Christ? Because you are a follower of Christ who should be effectively reaching out to fellow imperfect people in your home, office, school or other circles of influence, what could you do to strengthen your stand for Jesus Christ, who died to save you from your sin and give you eternal life, in the face of fear, pressure, and consequences of being associated with Him?

Worship & Prayer

Father, thank You for Your Word that allows us to look back at the lives of imperfect believers from long ago, learn from their mistakes, and be encouraged in our walk with Christ despite the struggles. Thank You for the eternal assurance that the fear, pressure, and worldly consequences I will experience on earth because of my faith in You will be but temporary, and that the rewards of being faithful to You is eternal. Give me strength to withstand those hardships. Bless me with people who will keep me accountable in my obedience to You. Mold me also, Father, to be the kind of believer who has the courage to stand up for You, and in so doing bring honor to Your name and draw others to You. In Jesus' name. Amen.