

## **WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY**

### **The Glory of God in the Sin of His People**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The arrest of Jesus, as recorded by John, set a pattern for the rest of the Passion narrative. Jesus is in control. Jesus gave Himself up to the arresting guard, they did not arrest Him. Later, we will see that it is Caiaphas and Pilot on trial, not Jesus. He oversaw the Cross and the grave. Again, A.W. Pink is right when he comments:

“When Christ died, He did so of His own voluntary will . . . Without His own consent none could have harmed a hair of His head”<sup>1</sup>

Even the betrayal of Peter was within the gracious power and foreordained will of Christ.

#### **A Note of John’s Gospel**

John doesn’t give all the details that Matthew, Mark, and Luke give on the betrayal of Peter. John does something remarkably interesting. It’s like he’s operating a video camera. He scans on the house of Annas, the father-in-law of the High Priest Caiaphas (18:12-14); then the camera moves to Peter and his actions as he approaches the home of Annas (vv15-18); then the view switches to a conversation in the house where Jesus and Annas are talking (vv19-24); and then final outside the home, to the fire where Peter is in his final stage of denial (vv25-27).

We have denial, trial, denial, trial, denial. I’m convinced that John records the events this way for a purpose. We have here a constant reminder between camera views of:

- a. The fickleness and unfaithfulness of us humans; and the faithful dependability of Jesus Christ.
- b. The dehumanizing failure of us; and the glorifying exaltation of Jesus Christ.

Both men are essentially on trial. Only one man excels in brilliant glory. This morning we want to look at the trial of Peter.

**TEXT: [John 18:15-18; 25-27 \(ESV\)](#)**

#### **THE STORY**

When we include the witnesses of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, with John we get a fascinating testimony of the trial of Peter. After Jesus allowed the cohort and temple guards to arrest him, they brought him

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<sup>1</sup> Pink, A.W., Exposition of the Gospel of John, The Zondervan Corp, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1975, Page 130

“bound” to Annas. We’ll talk about Annas in the next sermon, but the picture we get is that Peter and an unnamed disciple (whom we are certain is the human author of this Gospel, John.) were following Jesus as he was taken to Annas.

There is a gap in our understanding, but Mark clearly records that all the disciples had deserted Jesus. But it appears, for some unknown reason that John and Peter make their way back to where Jesus was being taken.

John was known by the household of Annas (John’s mother was Salome. Salome was related to Mary. Mary was related to Elizabeth. Elizabeth was married to Zechariah, and Zechariah was a priest. So there was a family connection with John’s family and the High Priestly family.) and so he went right into the house where Jesus was. But Peter hung around outside, not so willing to bash in. But John probably looks back and sees Peter outside and goes to the girl and the door so Peter could be brought in. We are told that there is a girl at the front door. This is significant to show us that they had not entered an official part of the Temple. They were entering a private home. Probably a group of homes formed around a common courtyard.

The girl looks at Peter and asked, ““You also are not one of this man’s disciples, are you?”<sup>2</sup> Peter answers, “I am not.” This girl must have known John who had no reservations about walking in. So, she says, “You also are not one?” Peter comes in the house and the interrogations there end with Annas sending Jesus to his son-in-law. For some reason Peter doesn’t continue and we will learn that Caiaphas’ house isn’t far away. (Within the same court complex) and noticing a nice fire that someone had started in the courtyard, Peter stopped and joined the group. A servant girl saw him in the light and Luke records: *“Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, “This man also was with him””* (Luke 22:56, ESV).

*“But he denied it, saying, “Woman, I do not know him.””* (Luke 22:57, ESV). This was the second denial this night. Meanwhile the trial of Jesus with Caiaphas is happening in another location. Then about an hour later some by-standers went up to Peter and said, “Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean;”<sup>3</sup> “Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you.”<sup>4</sup> And then Mark records these awful words: *“But he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “I do not know this man of whom you speak.””* (Mark 14:71, ESV)

This was the Peter that we read back in John 13 who said he would lay his life down for His Lord. But we read, *“Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.”* (John 13:38, ESV)

Then Luke records these poignant words: *“... And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he*

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<sup>2</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 18:17). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>3</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mk 14:70). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>4</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Mt 26:73). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

*had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly." (Luke 22:60–62, ESV)*

If Luke hadn't recorded those words, I don't know if I would have a sermon for you today. Picture the scene. It is dark. Jesus is in a lighted house being interrogated. Peter is by a lighted fire in the courtroom. Peter denies that he ever knew Jesus. Peter glances his eyes toward an open door and Peter sees the look of His Savior. Jesus on trial. Peter on trial. Peter denies Christ and then in a momentary glance, Peter realizes that not only did Jesus hear that, but Jesus had predicted that. *"And he went out and wept bitterly."*

We will soon read in John 20, after the Resurrection, that Jesus will ask Peter three time, "Do you love me?" I wonder if Peter's three-time denial had relevance to those three questions? Let me make 3 observations from this story:

## OBSERVATIONS

1. It is possible to love Jesus dearly and deny Him severely.
2. It is certain that Jesus predicts and foreordains our sins.
3. It is self-evident that those who deny Christ whom they love are bitterly broken and repentant.

Firstly, we can line up a multitude of people who are all saints in the Lord who have sinned grievously in their lives. Abraham our father of the faith was a liar and adulterer. David was an adulterer, liar, murderer. The sad possibility exists that those born of the Spirit, called into fellowship with Christ, granted the gift of eternal life, can grievously sin against their Saviour and God they love. And if you and I are not blinded to our own lives, we can say that we commit such crimes – all the time. The next time you read of a Christian celebrity that falls into sin, do not be surprised. Be surprised that you don't hear of it every day. And even more, be surprised it's not you or me.

Secondly, the Bible is clear that God not only predicts our sin but foreordains it. The word "foreordain" is a particular Biblical concept. The word has no comparison in English, so we must learn it. It means that God plans to allow sin to take place for He intends be glorified in the process. Notice the phrase I use: "He plans to allow it". Some people say, "God permits it", as if He stands by passively. No, God with intention and purpose, permit it to take place. You and I choose our sin for wrong. God chooses our sin for good. Therefore, the Christian can recount with joy, Romans 8:28 (ESV):

<sup>28</sup> *And we know that for those who love God  
all things [all failures, all sin, all pain, all suffering, all ..... all and all ....]  
work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. [my emphasis]*

Hours before Peter denied the Lord, Jesus said these words, *"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."* Peter said to him, *"Lord, I am ready to go with*

*you both to prison and to death.” Jesus said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.”” (Luke 22:31–34, ESV)*

Hear those words: “But I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail.” Did we not just read these words from the lips of our Saviour, recorded in John 17?

*“ . . . I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours . . . “I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.” (John 17: 8–9, 15, ESV).*

Christ ordained the sin of Peter and already made intercession for him.

Thirdly, people can sin against God and feel sadness. Judas can deny Christ and feels so bad that he takes his own life. When Christians sin against God, deny Christ and commit grievous sin, their love for Christ moves them from remorse to repentance. Listen to what Paul said about the remorse in Corinth:

*“For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.” (2 Corinthians 7:10, ESV).* Imagine a level of repentance that is so deep, so wide, so all-encompassing, that the penitent heart enjoys a relationship with Christ without regret. Peter is nothing more than another Judas. Why didn’t Peter kill himself? Why didn’t Peter hide in embarrassment, never to be heard of again? Why did Peter become that great preacher on the Day of Pentecost? Why did his life and ministry dominate the first half of the Acts of the Apostles? Why did Peter never, ever again speak of his deceit, his denial, and his sin? Peter knew a “salvation without regret”.

## APPLICATION

If you belong to Christ, you will sin. Your sin is no surprise to our Savior. He has already planned for it and planned to use it for His glory. But if you belong to Christ, your sin will bring you to deep remorse and repentance.

There is a natural response to this teaching that the New Testament anticipates. We read it in Romans 6:1 (ESV), *“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?”* If I’m going to sin; and God knows I’m going to sin; and if God’s grace is going to work it all together for good – then when don’t I just keep sinning? *“Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace?” (Romans 6:1, NLT)*

Paul teaches us in Romans 6 that people who are united to Christ don’t talk that way. People who are united to Christ, born of His Spirit cry, *“Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” (Romans 7:24, ESV)*

Hear the words of this author, John in his first letter: *“My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (1 John 2:1, ESV).*