

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. Scripture text: **Mark 14:27-31**.

And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away, because it is written, 'I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP SHALL BE SCATTERED.' [28] "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." [29] But Peter said to Him, "Even though all may fall away, yet I will not." [30] And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, that you yourself this very night, before a cock crows twice, shall three times deny Me." [31] But Peter kept saying insistently, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all were saying the same thing, too.

-  B. This lesson is a two-part sermon. Please come back tonight to finish this look at Peter.
- C. Your bulletin has the outline for both sermons (AM & PM).
- D. Peter is a wonderful person to study in the scriptures, because many of the qualities in his life are also in ours. We can relate with the struggles and problems that he went through.
- E. In this lesson this morning, we look at the problems that led to Peter's downfall as a faithful follower of Jesus. May we not do these things.

II. SEVEN STEPS IN PETER'S FALL.

A. First, **doubts** (Mt. 14:28; 16:23).

(Mt 14:28) And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."
(Mt 16:23) But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

1. Doubt is to be replaced with faith. Faith comes with knowledge (Rom. 10:17).
So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
Therefore, the more one knows--the less doubt they should have.
2. The righteous will live by faith (Hab. 2:4).
"Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.
3. Full assurance comes by faith (Heb. 10:22).
let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
4. X is the author and perfecter of faith (Heb. 12:2).
fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

B. Second, **boasts** (Mk. 14:27-31; 1Cor. 10:12).

(Mk 14:27-31) And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away, because it is written, 'I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP SHALL BE SCATTERED.' [28] "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." [29] But Peter said to Him, "Even though all may fall away, yet I will not." [30] And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you, that you yourself this very night, before a cock crows twice, shall three times deny Me." [31] But Peter kept saying insistently, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And they all were saying the same thing, too.

(1Cor 10:12) Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

1. Many times we boast and brag because of insecurities in our lives. Boasting makes us the center of our lives instead of X.
2. Boasting in arrogance is evil (Jas. 4:16).
But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.
3. There can be no boasting in our salvation (Eph. 2:9).
not as a result of works, that no one should boast.
4. Boasting ruins relationships (Gal. 5:26).
Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

C. Third, **sleeps** (Mk. 14:37; Rom. 13:11).

(Mk 14:37) And He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour?"

(Rom 13:11) And this *do*, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed.

1. The body needs sleep but at this time, Jesus needs Peter to be awake and ready. Are we sometimes, "Asleep at the switch?"
2. Do your sleeping at night (1Th. 5:7).
For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.
3. Spiritual sleep is sin (1Cor. 11:30).
For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.
4. We are to be awake, ready (1Cor. 16:13a).
Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.

 D. Fourth, **smites** (Jn. 18:10; Lk. 22:50).

(Lk 22:50) And a certain one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear.

(Jn 18:10) Simon Peter therefore having a sword, drew it, and struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave's name was Malchus.

1. Physical attributes never win spiritual battles. So many times the race is not to the swift, and the battle not to the strong (Eccl. 9:11).
I again saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, and the battle is not to the warriors, and neither is bread to the wise, nor wealth to the discerning, nor favor to men of ability; for time and chance overtake them all.
2. God looks on the heart (1Sam. 16:7).
But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God *sees* not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."
3. Jesus' kingdom is a spiritual one (Jn. 18:36,37).
Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm." [37] Pilate therefore said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."
4. Not by might or power, but by My Spirit (Zech. 4:6).
Then he answered and said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts.

 E. Fifth, **follows afar off** (Lk. 22:54).

And having arrested Him, they led Him *away*, and brought Him to the house of the high priest; but Peter was following at a distance.

1. When things were not going the way Peter thought they should he followed Jesus, but at a distance. The one willing to go to death for X (Lk. 22:33) is now truly beginning to become ashamed of being with Jesus.
And he said to Him, "Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!"
2. Lukewarm Xians make God sick (Rev. 3:15,16).
'I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I would that you were cold or hot. [16] 'So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth.
3. Jesus said it's with Me or against Me (Mt. 12:30).
"He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters.
4. Jesus requires no less than discipleship (Lk. 9:23).
And He was saying to *them* all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

 F. Sixth, **sits with the ungodly** (Lk. 22:55).

And after they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter was sitting among them.

1. Always be careful with those you associate with.
2. Psalms begins with our spiritual position (Psa. 1:1-3).
How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! [2] But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates

day and night. [3] And he will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season, And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.

3. Associations with immoral people (1Cor. 5:9; 15:33).
(1Cor 5:9-11) I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people;
(1Cor 15:33) Do not be deceived: “Bad company corrupts good morals.”
4. Unequal yokes (2Cor. 6:14,17).
Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?... [17] “Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,” says the Lord. “AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you.

 G. Seventh, **denies the Lord** (Lk. 22:57-62).

But he denied *it*, saying, “Woman, I do not know Him.” [58] And a little later, another saw him and said, “You are *one* of them too!” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!” [59] And after about an hour had passed, another man *began* to insist, saying, “Certainly this man also was with Him, for he is a Galilean too.” [60] But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.” And immediately, while he was still speaking, a cock crowed. [61] And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, “Before a cock crows today, you will deny Me three times.” [62] And he went out and wept bitterly.

1. This is the final step in Peter’s falling away. He does what he thinks he will never do (Mt. 26:33).
But Peter answered and said to Him, “*Even* though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away.”
2. Confess or deny--which is it? (Mt. 10:32,33).
“Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. [33] “But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.
3. To deny is to be faithless (2Tim. 2:11-14).
It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; [12] If we endure, we shall also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; [13] If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself. [14] Remind *them* of these things, and solemnly charge *them* in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless, *and leads* to the ruin of the hearers.
4. Denying the power of godliness (2Tim. 3:5).
holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; and avoid such men as these.

III. CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

 A. Don’t make these mistakes and endanger your soul:

1. Doubts.
2. Boasts.
3. Sleeps.
4. Smites.
5. Follows afar off.
6. Sits with the ungodly.
7. Denies the Lord.

 B. Tonight’s lesson will be how Peter came back to faithfulness.

- C. We will look at seven steps that were taken that helped Peter come back to God.
- D. Respond, repent, and be obedient to Jesus--today!
- E. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.