

PETER DENIES KNOWING JESUS

Ignatian Meditation Guides by Bill Gaultiere

Introduction to Ignatian Meditation

In Ignatius' 16th century approach to Scripture instead of analyzing a text, you use your senses to imagine yourself as a character in the story. Then you have a short, personal conversation with the Lord. Each reading is guided by a focus question below. In a group context follow the leader's instructions on what to share and be sure to protect people's confidentiality.

Background to the Text

This Gospel reading in The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius is in Week Three which focuses on the passion of Christ. Astonishingly, Jesus predicts that his lead disciple Peter will deny him three times. With stubborn pride Peter insists he is willing to die for his Lord. His heart-intentions are good, but he is not ready for this trial. So Jesus tells Peter he needs to train by watching and praying, but Peter falls asleep (Mark 14:32-42). Soon he does deny Jesus three times. Fortunately, Jesus had prayed for Peter earlier that when he falls his faith would not fail (Luke 22:32). Later Peter returns to Jesus and is restored.

Ask For the Grace

Father God, I desire the grace of sorrow, regret, and confusion because of my sins that send Jesus to the cross.

Imagine Scripture: Mark 14

27-28 Jesus told them, "You're all going to feel that your world is falling apart and that it's my fault. There's a Scripture that says, 'I will strike the shepherd; The sheep will go helter-skelter.' But after I am raised up, I will go ahead of you, leading the way to Galilee."

29 Peter blurted out, "Even if everyone else is ashamed of you when things fall to pieces, I won't be."

30 Jesus said, "Don't be so sure. Today, this very night in fact, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times."

31 He blustered in protest, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never deny you." All the others said the same thing...

66-67 [Later] Peter was down in the courtyard. One of the Chief Priest's servant girls came in and, seeing Peter warming himself there, looked hard at him and said, "You were with the Nazarene, Jesus."

68 He denied it: "I don't know what you're talking about." He went out on the porch. A rooster crowed.

69-70 The girl spotted him and began telling the people standing around, "He's one of them." He denied it again.

After a little while, the bystanders brought it up again. "You've got to be one of them. You've got 'Galilean' written all over you."

71-72 Now Peter got really nervous and swore, "I never laid eyes on this man you're talking about." Just then the rooster crowed a second time. Peter remembered how Jesus had said, "Before a rooster crows twice, you'll deny me three times." He collapsed in tears (MSG).

Prayer / Journaling / Soul Talk Prompts

1. Visualize yourself in the Gospel. Don't seek intellectual insights—stay with the imagery. Use your senses to see, touch, feel, and hear. What part of the story are you drawn to? Which character do you identify with or are you a bystander?

2. Experience the story in the role of the character God led you to. Then talk with the Lord. What do you feel? How does this relate to something in your life today? What is God saying to you?

ON TRIAL JESUS IS NONDEFENSIVE

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Background to the Text

This Gospel reading in The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius is in Week Three which focuses on the passion of Christ. A diverse group of Jewish religious leaders band against Jesus, their common enemy. They don't give him a fair trial and they slander and abuse him. They break their own rules and God's laws, showing their hypocrisy and evil hearts. But Jesus is quiet and doesn't defend himself. He only speaks to acknowledge that indeed he is indeed the Messiah and Son of God. Jesus shows us that the way to endure judgement and mistreatment with patience and kindness is by trusting in the love, affirmation, and power of our unseen Father who is with us.

Ask For the Grace

Father God, I desire the grace of sorrow, regret, and confusion because of my sins that send Jesus to the cross.

Imagine Scripture: Mark 14

53-54 They led Jesus to the Chief Priest, where the high priests, religious leaders, and scholars had gathered together. Peter followed at a safe distance until they got to the Chief Priest's courtyard, where he mingled with the servants and warmed himself at the fire.

55-59 The high priests conspiring with the Jewish Council looked high and low for evidence against Jesus by which they could sentence him to death. They found nothing. Plenty of people were willing to bring in false charges, but nothing added up, and they ended up canceling each other out. Then a few of them stood up and lied: "We heard him say, 'I am going to tear down this Temple, built by hard labor, and in three days build another without lifting a hand.'" But even they couldn't agree exactly.

60-61 In the middle of this, the Chief Priest stood up and asked Jesus, "What do you have to say to the accusation?" Jesus was silent. He said nothing.

The Chief Priest tried again, this time asking, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed?"

62 Jesus said, "Yes, I am, and you'll see it yourself: The Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Mighty One, Arriving on the clouds of heaven."

63-64 The Chief Priest lost his temper. Ripping his clothes, he yelled, "Did you hear that? After that do we need witnesses? You heard the blasphemy. Are you going to stand for it?" They condemned him, one and all. The sentence: death.

65 Some of them started spitting at him. They blindfolded his eyes, then hit him, saying, "Who hit you? Prophecy!" The guards, punching and slapping, took him away (MSG).

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DISCUSSION GUIDE

Read each of the following sections again. What does each section tell you about the love of Jesus?

2. vv. 12–26.
3. vv. 27–31 & vv. 66–72
4. vv. 32–42.
5. vv. 43–65

We all have embarrassing moments we can laugh about—later. There are shameful moments that we would give anything to undo. But while our pasts remind us, they don't have to define us.

What are some characteristics of someone who knows they are forgiven?

Read Mark 14:66–72.

What stands out to you?

Do you ever wonder if God could really forgive you for everything?

Read John 21:1–19.

What stands out to you?

Notice the invitation Jesus extends to Peter in verse 19. What did that represent for Peter?

In his letter to first-century Christians, most of whom he never met, Peter writes: “He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross...” Peter was convinced that Jesus’s death paid for your sin. What convinced him? Are you convinced?

Why do people get upset when they perceive that something is not fair?

Have you ever been in a situation where normal procedures were set aside for the sake of expediency? When is this warranted? How was the Sanhedrin reasoning with regard to expediting Jesus’ trial?

What was the Sanhedrin looking for in the witnesses who were called? In what situations do we sometimes look for evidence to support preconceived conclusions? How do we avoid this error?

What was the significance of Jesus' using the phrases "I am" and "Son of Man" in His answer?

Have you ever trusted a friend to defend you and then been disappointed? Were you able to forgive that person and restore the friendship?

In what situations are you tempted to make excuses in order to avoid being identified as a Christian? Are there other situations where you tend to simply lie low and avoid the subject?

Was there a time in your past where you denied knowing Jesus? Was there a time when you were not confronted, but still you could have spoken up and did not?

Do you feel shame and remorse over situations where you could have stood up for Jesus? Ask forgiveness from God, go back and correct your witness to that person where possible, and resolve, with God's help, to be courageous in the future.

How were Judas's and Peter's sins similar? How were their responses to guilt different?

How did Peter's experiences on that night prepare him for his ministry? What experiences have you had that help you communicate grace and compassion to others?

DIGGING DEEPER

[Peter Denies Jesus- Alistair Begg \(40:40\)](#)

[#48 - Peter's Denial- Chris Brown \(56:29\)](#)
[Sermon Notes and Discussion Guide](#)

[The End of the Beginning- Andy Stanley \(57:13\)](#)