

Tuesday, December 16, 2014

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Scripture

Luke 22:54-69

⁵⁴Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. ⁵⁵When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. ⁵⁶Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, "This man also was with him." ⁵⁷But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." ⁵⁸A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" ⁵⁹Then about an hour later still another kept insisting, "Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean." ⁶⁰But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about!" At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. ⁶¹The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." ⁶²And he went out and wept bitterly.

⁶³Now the men who were holding Jesus began to mock him and beat him; ⁶⁴they also blindfolded him and kept asking him, "Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?" ⁶⁵They kept heaping many other insults on him.

⁶⁶When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together, and they brought him to their council. ⁶⁷They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us." He replied, "If I tell you, you will not believe; ⁶⁸and if I question you, you will not answer. ⁶⁹But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

Devotional

There's something cutting about Peter's three-fold denial of Christ. The problem for me isn't that Peter is one of Jesus' closest disciples, or that he is trying to hide even when others call him out, though these are certainly bothersome. No, the problem for me is that I see myself in Peter.

As we get further into Advent, church life becomes busier and more demanding. Family life gains added pressure due to the constant reminders of 'tradition.' Time with our friends even gets stressful as we play the 'are we getting each other gifts' game. Even though our pressures must pale in comparison to the pressure of the crowd around Peter, the temptation can remain the same. If only I could deny Christ, then maybe I could enjoy this season of presents, family, and happy music.

It's easy to get bogged down this season, but in Christ we don't need to.

Prayer

Lord, in your mercy, deliver us from the temptation to focus on anything but you this season, and help us to focus on you. Amen.