

Luke 22:54-69 (New American Standard Bible)

Jesus' Arrest

54Having arrested Him, they led Him away and brought Him to the house of the high priest; but Peter was following at a distance. **55**After they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter was sitting among them. **56**And a servant-girl, seeing him as he sat in the firelight and looking intently at him, said, "This man was with Him too." **57**But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." **58**A little later, another saw him and said, "You are one of them too!" But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" **59**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." Immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed. **61**The Lord turned and looked at Peter And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had told him, "Before a rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times." **62**And he went out and wept bitterly. **63**Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking Him and beating Him, **64**and they blindfolded Him and were asking Him, saying, "Prophecy, who is the one who hit You?" **65**And they were saying many other things against Him, blaspheming.

Jesus before the Sanhedrin

66When it was day, the Council of elders of the people assembled, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him away to their council chamber, saying, **67**"If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe; **68**and if I ask a question, you will not answer. **69**"But from now on THE SON OF MAN WILL BE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND of the power OF GOD."

It is amazing what shame does to us. Shame has a way of distancing us from others. It is so intense an emotion; it can even distance us from God. We see this clearly in this passage about Peter.

Despite the fact that everyone around him knew exactly who he was, Peter continued to deny who he really was. He gave a false depiction of himself, but thinking he was safely hiding who he really was in the cover of the night. He denies himself to three different people who clearly know who he really is.

But the most intense part of the passage can be seen in the way that Peter's shame even distances him from Jesus. Peter was physically following Jesus at a distance. More than just the shame of that association, I would venture to say that Peter was afraid of what sacrifices would come about as a result of his association and relationship with God. I wonder if Peter not only carried the shame of being associated with such a radical man as Jesus, but I'll bet that he also carried the shame of knowing who Jesus was and choosing despite of that to deny Him for his own sake.

How often do we do this in our own lives? We think that by distancing ourselves from Jesus that we can avoid giving our lives for the sake of Him...whatever that may mean.

Even more, as we feel the shame in knowing that we are not willing to fully sacrifice our lives for the one that sacrificed so much for us, we create illusions in the firelight of our lives. Pretending to follow God but refusing to know God and to be known by God intimately.

In this passage, God predicted Peter's denial to him. The passage says in verse 61 that had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." Jesus knew before he had even begun his journey to the cross, exactly who he was dying for. He knew the kind of people that He was sacrificing his life for. It is a miraculous event that Jesus would not only come and take on our suffering, but do it knowing how unworthy of it we are. It is miraculous that He would experience that rejection and all of the hurt that goes with it and choose to make that sacrifice anyways. It is miraculous that Jesus looks straight at the most shameful places in our hearts and loves us the same.

Jesus, may we not distance ourselves from You in an effort to cover who we really are. Shine your light in the dark crevices of our lives. May we accept your grace and may your grace carry us through the places that you have called us to go. Amen.