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***Our devotion is an outline of the message at Belfield Baptist Church for May 30, 2021.***

**Steps in Peter's Downfall: Mark 14:29-41, 54, 66-72**

What is so sad about this passage is that here is a disciple of the Lord that backslides. A man that was really close to Jesus at the time, but a man that was not prepared to meet the needs and problems of the world. He knew Jesus but he did not know how to comprehend Jesus.

When I use the term backslidden, I am referring to a person that was closer to the Lord than at the present time.

Backsliding is a process: Look at Eve She first saw, then desired, then took then ate before she gave to Adam. We can see that there was a gradual process, slow, easy and sure.

Falling away from the company and fellowship of Christ is the result of an inward disease preying upon the vitals of our spiritual being.

**THE DISEASE IS SELF WILL**

Let us follow Peter in his downgrade march and see how easy it was for him and compare ourselves with him.

**1. SELF CONFIDENCE.** Peter said, (V.29) **"Although all shall be offended, yet will not I"** Peter had already started trusting in himself, here he was already using that little word **I**, he was in essence saying that he was better than all the rest and I will not do it.

As I have said before, whenever I become the number one word in our lives we are or have left God out. I CAN DO THIS, OR I CAN DO THAT, the question is, or the fact is, **I can do nothing without God.**

Proverbs 28:26 says: **<sup>26</sup> He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.** and I Cor. 10:12: **<sup>12</sup> Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.**

**2. PROUD BOASTING:** (V.31) **<sup>31</sup> But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also**

**said they all.** So, said they all, but Peter spoke with more boldness. Peter was as yet unbelieving and ignorant of his own weakness.

**3. UNWATCHFULNESS.** (V.37) <sup>37</sup> **And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?** Pride and self-confidence are sure to lead to unwatchfulness. Jesus had told these men to stay there and watch for Him, but what happened, they went to sleep.

By this sleep, he became insensitive to the suffering of Christ. Or in our day the work of Christ.

He has told us to do the very same thing, watch for sinners and brothers, but what have we done, we have gone to sleep.

**4. ASHAMEDNESS.** (V.54) <sup>54</sup> **And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.** Jesus is not so popular now with the multitude. Peter follows but for enough off as not to be identified with Him.

A professing Christian is indeed afar off when he is ashamed of Him and His word.

At this stage the Word of God is neglected, prayers given up, and the company of those who testify for Christ forsaken.

**5. WORLDLINESS:** (V.54) <sup>54</sup> **And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.**

Having fallen out of company with Christ, he now finds his company among those who know him not and warms himself at the enemy's fire.

What about our reaction today, how worldly are we?

**6. DENIAL:** While he was warming himself, he was accused with having been with Jesus. But he denied, saying, I know not (V 67-68) <sup>67</sup> **And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.** <sup>68</sup> **But he denied, saying, I**

**know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.**

When a person has gone the length of finding warmth among the Lord's enemies, he is prepared for the next step – DENIAL. Jesus told us about this in Matthew 10:33 **33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.** Do we deny Jesus, in works, speech, love, tithes, witness etc.?

**7. RECKLESSNESS:** (V.71) **71 But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak.** What a sad chapter, a sad commentary of the life of one of Jesus's disciples. He cursed the Lord and the cock crew. (72) **72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.**

I do not think Peter had had that personal relationship with Jesus at this time. It came, in John 21, but what about us?

As we think about what is going on today in the world, it is necessary that we cleave

unto the Lord in all situations. All we have to do is compare our world to Peter's downfall and see how the two are much alike.

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