

The Erosion of Fidelity

"Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly." Matt.26:75 NIV

What is it that can bring a person to deny the Lord? Do they wake up in the morning and decide, 'Today would be a good day to turn away from my Savior'? Like most 'departures' we find in life, it is gradual...a series of slow, seemingly insignificant choices that give way to a bitter end. How many couples that find themselves facing the unwanted reality of 'parenthood', woke up one morning and said, 'today I think I will make a child?' No, like termites gnawing away unseen, devouring little choices erode the fidelity of our love and our very lives. Let's take a few minutes and retrace the earlier steps of Peter in Matthew 26, and see if the Spirit of God will give us insight into his costly concessions.

"Peter replied, "Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will." "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "This very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." But Peter declared, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the other disciples said the same." vv.33-35

He boasted too much

He possessed what many of us struggle to keep down...an over inflated view of himself. There is no smaller package in the world, than a person wrapped up with themselves. Pride always goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall, the writer of Proverbs tells us. How much do you depend upon yourself?

"Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak." vv.40-41

He prayed too little

When you depend upon yourself, then you don't need God. Prayer glorifies God because it exalts His all-sufficiency when His children rely wholly upon Him for life and for godliness! What priority does prayer have in your life?

"With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear." v.51

He acted too fast

Failure to pray and seek the Lord, leads to impulsive acts that go against the work of God, though they may appear to be heroic! Make sure that your initiative is sourced in the initiative of God, who delights to make known His will to His friends. How often do you act without thinking?

"But Peter followed him at a distance, right up to the courtyard of the high priest. He entered and sat down with the guards to see the outcome." v.58

He followed too far

Peter is always mentioned first and more often than any of the other disciples. He was a man of action, eager to speak, and the only one of the twelve that walked on water! But, now he becomes a spectator rather than a participator in the passion of the Christ, his Messiah! How close are you following Christ?

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You see it was a series of little eroding choices that brought a bold and confident man undone. So much so that in John 21, he decides to go back fishing. What is the quality of your fidelity to Christ? Is your 'first-love' relationship with Christ as vibrant and alive as it was the day He saved you and made you His child? Why not have a 'heart-stock-take' right now? Seek out a friend who loves you just as you are but far too much to let you stay that way, and ask them for their input into your life.

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