

Sermon Discussion Questions



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

“PETER'S SPIRITUAL COLLAPSE”

Big Idea: God's mercy is greater than our biggest failures!

Discuss

However you receive your news—by watching a nightly broadcast, clicking on a link in your social media feed, or opening a print newspaper—it's hard to avoid stories these days about leaders who are being “outed” as egregious moral failures. Some of the accusations, to be sure, have only confirmed previous suspicions, but in other cases, the revelation of wrongdoing has been a distressing surprise about a beloved and well-respected individual.

Peter, on the other hand, had a very public failure *before* becoming one of the primary leaders in the early church. Furthermore, he must have openly admitted that failure since the story of it is in all four gospels, including Mark, the gospel that is traditionally believed to be the eyewitness account of Peter. Imagine a pastoral search committee recommending to a church a man who had vehemently denied any acquaintance with Jesus after being in ministry for three years. Our Lord welcomed just such a man as a shepherd of his flock.

- 1) Peter's spiritual collapse was very definitely not something he expected (see Mark 14:27-31). We also know that he was the one who confessed Jesus as “the Christ” when Jesus asked his disciples, “Who do you say I am?”
 - How then can you explain Peter's denial of Jesus?
 - In your opinion, on what or on whom was he relying? (See Mark 8:31-33, Mark 14:37, 40-41, and John 18:10)
 - Knowing that we ourselves are weak, what should we be doing (or not doing) in order to avoid a spiritual collapse of our own? If time, read Ephesians 6:10-18.
- 2) We know that Peter was filled with grief immediately after he denied Jesus for the third time. Did Jesus extend mercy and grace to him only because Peter was so deeply sorry?
 - Does God only grant forgiveness of sins according to the depth of our remorse? Explain your answer.
- 3) The story of Peter's restoration (found in John 21:15-17) assures us that God's mercy is vast and deep. No wonder the apostle Paul exclaimed, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31)
 - Paul also recognized, however, that a belief in limitless grace can tempt some to believe that sin is no big deal. (See Rom. 6:1) What should prevent us from caring little about what we do or say because we believe that every sin is covered by the blood of Jesus?
- 4) If time, here is one more question: in what concrete ways can we show Christ-like grace and mercy to those around us?

DATE: March 31, 2019

SPEAKER: Chad/Frank

SERIES: The Gospel of Mark

PASSAGE: Mark 14:66-72

Pray

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out our transgressions. Wash away all our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin.

We know our transgressions and that we have done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.

Create in us a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within us.

Restore to us the joy of your salvation and grant us willing spirits, to sustain us.

O Lord, open our lips, and our mouths will declare your praise. A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

– *based on Ps. 51*

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

PCA Committee on Administration

PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Bill and Melanie serving in sensitive area