

THE SEED OF FORGIVENESS IN THE SOIL OF DENIAL

Sermon Study Questions

Can you remember a time when someone close to you, denied knowing you when you needed them? Share your experience, if you are willing. What was it like? Have you ever been the one who denied knowing someone because you were embarrassed by them, or for some other reason? (Politics, religious beliefs, reputation, friendships, job related experiences, school, etc.)

Read Matthew 26:31-36. What is the context of this passage? What happened before this? Where were they when Jesus said this? What would you have felt as a disciple? In what times and in what ways do people deny knowing Jesus Christ? In what times and in what ways have you denied knowing Him?

How would someone identify you (or anyone) as one of Jesus' disciples? In what ways do we deny being a disciple of Jesus? through what actions, words, attitudes, etc.?

After Jesus was arrested, Luke 22:54 says, "Peter followed, but from a safe distance." How do we do the same thing today?

What was Peter doing in the courtyard of the High Priest? What do you imagine he was thinking?

Luke says it was an hour after the first two denials that Peter denied Jesus one last time. What might have been going through Peter's mind during this time? What was Jesus going through right in front of Peter? What does it say about Peter that even an hour later he denied Jesus again? What would it have been like if you were Peter and Jesus looked at you after your third denial?

Unconfessed sin can quickly turn to shame. And shame can destroy us. It moves us from saying, "I did something bad" to saying, "I am bad." What is the difference? What does it take to deal with shame?

Read John 21:14-19. How is this a time of forgiveness and second chances for Peter?

Discuss Dr. Martin's statement: "All of us are going to deny something. It boils down to one of two things. We are either going to deny Jesus, and bury ourselves in regret and shame. Or we will deny ourselves, pick up our cross and follow Him."