



**LIKE  
HIM**  
A 90 DAY STUDY OF MARK

# Back From Failure

March 17-23, 2024

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## **90 DAY MEMORY STATEMENT**

**I am His child, deeply loved, totally forgiven, fully pleasing and complete in Christ.**

## **MAIN POINT**

Despite our past sins and failures, Jesus loves us and wants to redeem and restore us to Himself.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Have you ever had a “falling out” with a close friend or family member? Ask those who are willing, to share their experience. Ask them to share how they sought to restore the relationship.

How has conflict and restoration changed your personal relationships?  
Has this made your relationships stronger? How so?

One of the best tests of the strength of a relationship is conflict. The people who truly love us and have our best interests at heart are those who we are able to endure conflict with and come out on the other side with a stronger relationship. Peter had something of a “falling out” with Jesus. Despite his bold claims that he would rather die than turn away from Jesus, on the night of Jesus’ betrayal, Peter denied His Lord three times. Peter’s failure, however, did not stop Jesus from loving, pursuing, redeeming, and reconciling Peter. Peter’s relationship with Jesus is a picture of the relationship God offers every sinner through faith in the death and resurrection of His Son. By looking at Peter’s relationship with Jesus, we will see that our past sins and failures do not disqualify us from receiving Christ’s love and participating in His mission.

## **UNDERSTANDING**

**READ [MARK 14:22-31](#), [66-72](#).**

What do you know about the relationships between Peter and Jesus?

Why was denying Jesus unfathomable to Peter?

Why might it be dangerous for us to think that we are incapable of doing so?

What emotions might Peter have felt in that moment when he realized Jesus’ prophecy came true?

When have you felt like Peter? What do we learn about Peter from his response to his denial (v. 72)?

Peter’s denial couldn’t have been further from the truth. Peter was one of the first men Jesus called to be His disciples (see [Mark 1](#)). During Jesus’ three years of earthly ministry, Peter was present for some of the most miraculous moments. Peter exhibited great faith like the time

when he jumped out of the boat to walk on water (see [Matthew 14](#)), and he was one of Jesus' best friends. He wouldn't have been in the courtyard outside Jesus' trial if he didn't love Jesus, but fear and self-preservation kicked in, and he allowed those emotions to control him. Peter blatantly denied his friendship with Jesus, and if we're being totally honest, we know that we've done the same thing. Maybe we've never come right out and said we don't know Jesus, but just because we've never said it out loud doesn't mean we haven't communicated the same thing with the choices we make.

**List some ways we deny knowing Jesus in our speech, actions, or lack of either.  
How can we combat the temptation to deny Christ with our words and actions?  
How might we as a group help each other in this regard?**

Denying Jesus takes many forms, and it doesn't have to be verbal. It's far too easy to downplay our relationship with God when we allow fear and insecurity to determine our behavior. We should take a cue from Jesus, whose love motivated Him to be completely selfless, which included forgiving Peter for his denial.

**READ [JOHN 21:15-19](#).**

**Given Peter's bold proclamation that he would die before denying Christ in Mark 14, how would you expect Jesus to confront him?  
How did Jesus interact with Peter in these verses? What does this tell us about Him?**

Three times Peter had denied Jesus, and at this meeting on the shoreline, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him three times, each canceling out a denial. Their dialogue made it clear that in God's eyes, love far outweighs failure, and no one is beyond His reconciliation. That kind of love would propel Peter to spend the rest of his life spreading the good news of the gospel.

**What task did Jesus charge Peter with in these verses? Given Peter's moral and spiritual failure, did Peter seem like a likely candidate for this charge?  
Why or why not? Based on what you know about Peter, how did he handle this charge?**

Though Peter denied him, Jesus was not finished with him. He again issued His call to Peter to follow Him and to serve Him out of love for Him. Peter's love for Jesus was to express itself in caring for His people. Jesus' conversation with Peter shows He viewed love as the key to faithful discipleship and service. Jesus challenged Peter to show His love for Him and follow Him by caring for His people. If we really love Jesus, we will want to get involved in serving Him by caring for His people.

**What did Jesus mean by His prediction in verse 18?  
What sacrifices might following Christ and living out His mission demand of us?**

Peter had denied the Lord out of fear of possible arrest and suffering. Jesus, however, revealed to Peter following and serving Him would require sacrifice. In fact, Peter would be called on to sacrifice his life. The first time he met Jesus, Peter was fishing. That day, Jesus called him out of the boat and invited Peter to follow Him. He issued the same invitation here, reminding Peter that there's no going back to the way life was before. He couldn't be a fisherman because he had more important work to do. He was given the responsibility of shepherding Jesus' sheep. Jesus was calling Peter to a life of love, called for and inspired by the sacrifice of Jesus.

## **APPLICATION**

How might remembering the resurrection of Jesus and the restoration of Peter change your perspective on your past failures?

How might remembering these things empower you for ministry in the present?

In what ways are you encouraged by Jesus' conversation with Peter?

What are some ways you can focus more pointedly on following Jesus by caring for His people?

What are some tangible ways we might express the redeeming, reconciling, and gracious love of Christ to the people around us?

## **PRAYER**

Thank God for loving us while we were still sinners. Pray that we would understand, appreciate, and delight in the love of God in Jesus Christ. Pray that God's love for us in Christ would compel us to share His love with others.

## **COMMENTARY**

### **MARK 14:22-31, 66-72**

**14:22** The institution of the Last Supper is recorded in all three Synoptic Gospels (vv. [22-26](#); [Matthew 26:26-29](#); [Luke 22:19-20](#)) and by Paul ([1 Corinthians 11:23-25](#)). Mark did not specify at what point in the traditional course of the Passover meal Jesus instituted the Last Supper. This is my body is metaphorical.

**14:23** They all drank from one cup. "Eucharist" derives from the Greek word for giving thanks.

**14:24** The phrase blood of the covenant recalls the institution of the Mosaic covenant at Sinai when the Israelites were sprinkled with blood ([Exodus 24:1-8](#); cp. [Hebrews 9:19-20](#); [10:28-30](#)). Jesus's blood established a new covenant. Poured out for many recalls Jesus's words in [10:45](#) and Isaiah's words ([Isaiah 53:11-12](#)) about Messiah dying on behalf of others.

**14:25** Jesus's solemn formula Truly I tell you focused the group's attention on the eschatological future. Even though Jesus had explained his death and its meaning, it would not be the end for him. The day (cp. [13:17,19-20,24,32](#)) would come when he would drink with them in the kingdom of God (cp. [15:43-46](#)).

**14:26** The Passover meal traditionally ended with singing the Hallel psalms ([Psalms 115-118](#)).

**14:27** Jesus told his disciples, All of you will fall away . . . It is written grounds Jesus's prediction in OT Scripture, specifically [Zechariah 13:7](#). Jesus's prediction of the disciples' desertion and of Peter's denial is recorded in all four Gospels ([Matthew 26:31-35](#); [Mark 14:27-31](#); [Luke 22:31-34](#); [John 13:36-38](#)).

**14:28** Jesus referred to his resurrection and added that he would gather his disciples again in Galilee for a new mission (cp. [16:7](#)).

**14:29-31** Quick-tongued Peter declared his steadfastness, but Jesus infallibly foreknew that Peter would cower in the face of opposition. Not only would he desert like the others, but he would also deny Jesus three times.

**14:66** This picks up from v. 54. The phrase the courtyard below indicates Jesus's hearing was held in the hall above the entry level to the high priest's house.

**14:67** As Peter stood in the courtyard of the high priest's house (see note at v. [54](#)), a servant said she had seen him with the man from Nazareth (a contemptuous usage, as is "the Galilean," [Matthew 26:69](#)).

**14:68** Only Mark records Jesus as predicting a rooster would crow twice (vv. [29-31](#)). This is a logical place for the first crowing, even though it apparently escaped Peter's notice.

**14:69** This time those standing nearby were made aware of Peter's identity.

**14:70** Peter's accent identified him as a Galilean ([Matthew 26:73](#)).

**14:71** Peter's denials escalated. To curse means to call down God's curse on oneself (cp. [Acts 23:12,14,21](#)). To swear refers to taking an oath in God's name. Peter's cursing and swearing backed his strongest denial—I don't know this man.

**14:72** Immediately links Peter's third denial to the fulfillment of Jesus's prophecy (vv. [26-31](#)). Jesus turned and looked at Peter ([Luke 22:61](#)) and then he remembered Jesus's prediction and his own vow of steadfastness. The last sentence of the verse indicates Peter's total remorse.

### **JOHN 21:15-19**

**21:15-19.** Following their breakfast meal on the shores of the Sea of Tiberias, Jesus turned to Peter and asked a series of questions related to Peter's devotion. The first word for love, used in Jesus' first two questions, refers to a love that involves the will and personality. The second kind of love, indicated by the word for love used in the third question of Jesus, refers more to the emotions than to the will.

Regardless of whether or not much is to be made of these word distinctions, the key issue is that of love for Christ, and this Peter surely expressed. His earlier three denials are here answered in three affirmations of love and service. Jesus clearly wanted love for Him to include both will and emotions, demonstrated in a life of discipleship and devotion to the church.

Then Jesus forecast the kind of death Peter would die in order to glorify God. The early church understood the "stretching out of hands" mentioned here to mean crucifixion. Tradition understands the death of Peter to have been by upside-down crucifixion.