

We're continuing our reading with what's happening to Jesus during Holy Week. When he's going, and at this point, he's just been turned in. So Judas has just betrayed him. He's being arrested and carried on, and it's interesting because we know this part of the story, right? We know all of these people, all these bad people came and took Jesus and abandoned him. Everybody abandoned him. They all left him. He was alone. And it was intentionally made that way. He was intentionally left alone. He goes, and he's talking to the high priest. And this high priest is nobody. It's really nobody at that time. He was the previous high priest, and he wouldn't give up power. He had a puppet placed in charge of the Sanhedrin, and he wanted to find out what this was all about. He wanted to know why everyone was following Jesus. He wanted to know what was going on. What made him so special, because he was the high priest. Before he was the person that was in charge all that time. And they never heard of him, never seen him, never knew anything about him. It never knew anything about him because he didn't care. He was happy and content being in his place of power and his position of power. And he didn't care about who he was hurting below him. He didn't care about who else could be leading. Who else could be helping people. He didn't care about any of that? What he cared about was what made the Sanhedrin look good and what made him look good.

And so when he had Jesus arrested, he brought him to his house. He had him away from everybody else. And in Jewish law at that time, Jesus was not compelled to talk. You didn't have to say anything.. He wasn't supposed to say anything. Their beliefs were that they were supposed to bring witnesses. They were to bring at least three witnesses to testify against Jesus, and they didn't take anybody. They imprisoned him by himself. They separated him away from everyone else. which wasn't legal, which wasn't right. And he says that. He says, I've done nothing wrong. And if I have, why don't you have anybody else here?

Unfortunately, that sounds very similar to a lot of things going on in the world today, 2000 years later. And we're still not adhering to the laws of the land. Not just what we're supposed to do legally, but within our own biblical laws. That's what we're talking about with Peter today. If you think about it, if you really, truly, think about it, we are all like Peter. We all deny Jesus. We don't mean to. It's not our intention to. And I can see a lot of looks out there saying, I don't. How do I do this?

Jesus performed a lot of miracles. He went, and he helped a lot of people. But he said two things. When they asked him, which was the most important Covenant, he said I am not here to teach the Covenants. I'm here to fulfill the prophecies. I am here to be the one. But the most important Covenant, Commandment, I am sorry, love no God above your God. Love him with all your heart, Your mind, and your soul. And the second one is to treat your neighbor as you want to be treated. Love your neighbor. That's it. That was his lessons. That is what his Commandments were. Those two things.

Now, we all sin, we know we sin. There's no denying that. You look at Ten Commandments, and you're going to be able to see him because they're getting posted everywhere. Chinese fortune cookies the whole bit. It's going to be all over for us to see. So you will see that you're sinning because you're not honoring your father or mother. That's a big one, right? When you're a kid, you don't honor them because, you know, better. As a teenager, you know, more than they do. And then, as you get older, you realize, or at least you hear, and you argue with them because they know more than you do. It's a fun time. We covet things of our neighbors. We covet their houses. We covet their new cars. Their insurance packages are

better than ours. I've got one minister that I talk to. He gets a week's vacation every six weeks. I don't know one, how he accomplishes anything and two, even if I had it, I wouldn't take it. But it's still something that I'm like, man that would be nice to take a vacation every six weeks. But that's sin, right? That's me sinning. That's me governing something else. That's not the same thing as Peter's denial.

Peter's denial is something that we do when we say things like those people. When we start to tell a story and we look over our shoulder first. I did that this week. This week I was talking about another church in town, and I had to look over my shoulder real quick to make sure what I was going to say was appropriate. And I felt bad, first time in my life, I felt bad for that. But it's something Jesus tells us in Matthew 25 31-46. Remember we talked about it a few weeks ago. Feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, clothe the naked, help the sick And visit. and visit the prison. When we don't do those things, we're turning away from Jesus. When we laugh at colorful jokes, we're turning away from Jesus.

That's not what he said to do. We're supposed to love our neighbor. We're supposed to take care of our neighbor. When we don't do those things, we deny Jesus. We deny ourselves truly, just like Peter. He didn't mean to. He was cold. He was scared. He knew that if he said something otherwise that supported Jesus, he could have been hurt. He could have been killed. He didn't have the courage to stand up and say, yes, I am his disciple. And that's a hard thing to do when you're in a group of people that don't believe. It's very hard to stand up and say, yes, I believe. I had one friend. I asked them one day, like do you believe in Jesus. And she said to me of course I do, I wear a cross. Like, That doesn't mean you believe in Jesus. I'm like because you're wearing an Iowa Hawkeye shirt right now. And you don't even know who they are. Of course. I do. Okay, who are they? They're a college in Ames? No! Go say that in Ames, see what happens. But that's true. That's it! You can say things you can wear the symbols. You can do whatever, but if you aren't living that life, they don't mean anything. And it is a hard thing to not laugh at some jokes. It's a hard thing to not say "those people." Sue said it last week. Last week, I said. Jesus, knows. Jesus knows we're going to slip, but it's okay. It's okay, because he still loves us. He still wants us to succeed. Otherwise, he wouldn't have given himself so that we could live. So remember in this beautiful weather that we have that the sun is going to come up. The rooster is going to Crow. The alarms are going to go off, and it'll be a new day. It'll be a day that he loves you.

Let us pray.