

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL DECEMBER 16, 2014

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SCRIPTURE

LUKE 22:54-69

54Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house. But Peter was following at a distance. 55When they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. 56Then a servant-girl, seeing him in the firelight, stared at him and said, "This man also was with him." 57But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know him." 58A little later someone else, on seeing him, said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" 59Then about an hour later still another kept insisting, "Surely this man also was with him; for he is a Galilean." 60But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about!" At that moment, while he was still speaking, the cock crowed. 61The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the cock crows today, you will deny me three times." 62And he went out and wept bitterly.

63Now the men who were holding Jesus began to mock him and beat him; 64they also blindfolded him and kept asking him, "Prophecy! Who is it that struck you?" 65They kept heaping many other insults on him.

66When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, gathered together, and they brought him to their council. 67They said, "If you are the Messiah, tell us." He replied, "If I tell you, you will not believe; 68and if I question you, you will not answer. 69But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

DEVOTIONAL

There's something cutting about Peter's three-fold denial of Christ. The problem for me isn't that Peter is one of Jesus' closest disciples, or that he is trying to hide even when others call him out, though these are certainly bothersome. No, the problem for me is that I see myself in Peter.

As we get further into Advent, church life becomes busier and more demanding. Family life gains added pressure due to the constant reminders of 'tradition.' Time with our friends even gets stressful as we play the 'are we getting each other gifts' game. Even though our pressures must pale in comparison to the pressure of the crowd around Peter, the temptation can remain the same. If only I could deny Christ, then maybe I could enjoy this season of presents, family, and happy music.

It's easy to get bogged down this season, but in Christ we don't need to.

PRAYER

Lord, in your mercy, deliver us from the temptation to focus on anything but you this season, and help us to focus on you. Amen.

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