

So. W. June 1, 73 2:11 PM
Grove Park July 1, 1990 1:11 PM
Lake Drummond March 16, 1997 11:11 AM
Vader Tape

THE NIGHT OF DENIAL

you ago when the Northern lights Luke 22:54-62 were especially bright in Ky.
A young man went out late one night - SAW them & thought the end of time had come.
He rushed community waking people up - set up - Judgment Day has come - old man yelled back
INTRODUCTION: "Go back to bed, who ever heard of the Judgment Day coming in the middle of the night!"

V. 34

This is the story of a tragedy. Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto Thee that this night, before the cock crows, thou shalt deny me thrice. Denial of Jesus - anywhere, at any time, under any and all circumstances is a very serious matter and will inevitably lead to serious results. If you were in a group of persons and they should begin to deride Jesus and his Gospel and his church - and his people, and put contempt upon them what would you do. What would you say. What would be your attitude. How would you behave. And those conditions come time and time again. What would you a professing Christian, known and received as a Christian, under such difficult conditions like these that we find in the Bible and we will deal with this evening.

This is where Peter found himself. You will recall, we are talking about the night before the crucifixion of Jesus, the Saviour. And this is a most serious, sacred time in the life of all of the Disciples. And it is a night of temptation as well as a night of denial.

Night scenes in Bible - unexpected things happen at night - Start with Church Pulpit The Curstain by calling New Preacher!
young couple got preacher out of bed at 3 AM, to marry them.
Newspaper Headline Next Day - "Preacher ties knot in shirttail"

Jesus has spoken with his Disciples about the crisis that is coming and he has mentioned that they will forsake him. And they will be offended because of him within a very few hours. And that they will desert him.

This night scene from the Bible we might summarize our message with four words.

- First, warning. V. 34. Second, warning. V. 54,55. Third, wickedness. V. 56-59. Fourth, weeping. V. 60-62.

I. WARNING - V. 34

V. 34
 It must have been a very hard thing for Jesus to say to his honored and beloved Disciple Peter, in the presence of all the rest, at this last tender and yet sorrowful meeting before the crucifixion as found in V. 34. "I tell thee Peter, the cock shall not crow this day before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." That Disciple was very honest and unsuspecting. And he was very outspoken in his attachment to his Lord. And this must have truly pierced his heart.

V. 33
 We seem to hear him answer in V. (33) - "Lord, I am ready to go with Thee. Both to prison and to death." Oh Master, how much I love Thee, I can only say. Have I not often gone through grief. Now this is the prize. Have I not forsaken all to follow Thee. Have I not been with Thee and all Thy temptations. Have I not openly declared Thee to be the Son of God. Have I not seen thy glory on the mount and seen thy power over death. Hast thou not given me the name rock.

Doest thou think that I am capable of this cowardest.

Now these were sorrowful words of warning that fell upon the Disciples heart. It was a night in the Upper Room at Jerusalem, where they were assembled. The Pass-Over Feast was done. The city was calm. The thanksgiving song that sounded in every Jewish home had ceased to be heard. The lights had gone out. The Roman guards on the walls paced too and fro silently.

V. 32 - Prayed for - Not Fail - Strengthen Brethren -
 In that still hour just before midnight, the voice of Jesus was heard in that upper chamber speaking to his Disciples the blessed words which have comforted millions of mourners. Which will bring peace to the troubled heart, at the end of time. They are tender. And he pours out his burdened soul to them in prayer. That they may be kept from this evil world. They were listening and wondering in silence to that prayer and their hearts were bound anew to him. Everyone of them was ready to go to prison

and to death with him, Peter said. And when they altogether break out in a new expression of their love for him, Jesus looks - all of you shall be offended because of me this night. And of course Peter was the first one to declare and renew his readiness to die for the Lord Jesus. He makes this startling, sorrowful warning in the way of a declaration. Thou shalt deny me thrice.

It must have been a surprise to all the Disciples who heard it. They were deeply touched - no doubt they wondered, about the earnestness of Peter who had declared his devotion to his Lord. How could a man so strong as this express his love and yet the Saviour warn him that there was a danger coming that he might deny him. But in self-confidence, Peter thought he was ready now for any test that might come. Or that might come later on. And he made a speech, and he said, Lord Jesus, I will never forsake you. These others may but not I. Because I plan to go to death with you. I will die but I will not deny.

*A preacher asked a little boy - "Would you be afraid of the devil?"
By said "Not a little evil like me, But I would be
afraid of a great big devil like you!"*

And when Jesus said before the cock shall crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

Following this warning, we find that Peter was insistent that he would die and he would not deny.

Now let me say that back-sliding begins in a moment many times when an individual believes that they understand Christianity and Christ. And the fact that they feel - and Paul says you were disobedient to the Heavenly vision. You have been disobedient to the Heavenly vision. The cross has confronted you and you have shunned it. You did not believe that that could be the pathway to higher life.

Now I've always been afraid of the man who tells me that he is never going to deny Christ. And perhaps we have heard people in testimony meetings and saying, whosoever

turns their back on Jesus - well, I am never going to do that. Now this is what Peter was saying in substance. When Jesus gave him this warning. Peter was making his reply.

10 Comm

II. WARMING - V. (54-55)

Then took they him and led him (Jesus) and brought him into the (high priest's) house and followed (afar off.) And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were sat down together. Peter sat down among them. And I call this point warming. This is the place where Peter comes in and (sits) down by the fire to warm himself. Sometimes those who promise most perform least. But their failure to keep their good words is no reason for not promising. Those who promise nothing are still more apt to do nothing. A great and a true man shall never be afraid to say that he means to do this as his duty. A faithful and a loving heart will find some way to make known his feeling about a promise.

V574

coming attraction

Radio Quaker: Do you want to learn what hell is? Tune in next week, we'll be featuring our organist!

Now we do (not) want to blame Peter tonight for his earnestness in declaring his devotion to his Master. But I think we have something to learn from his failure to keep his good, commendable promise. The (sad words) of Jesus is that his best friends that very night, before the night passed, that the Redeemer would be bowed down to this earth in agony, and bitterness, and his favorite Disciples were going to be little effected by the distress and they were not going to hear his cries. And the hour was going to pass. And they were going to be scattered.

Jesus was left alone and he was led by that (mid-night mob).

Now this Scripture says, V. (54) - Peter followed (afar off.) Hiding himself in the shadow of the city walls, around the street corners, that he might not be suspected

V54

as a Disciple. And it is not long before he is there seated and warming himself by the fire that had been made. He sat down among them the Bible says. There they were in the open court and Peter joined the scoffers and warmed himself at the enemies fire.

So the crisis hour had come, Judas had gone away to bargain with the enemies of Jesus. And they had come back and confronted Jesus, and now he is under arrest. And they are going through some legal trials.

And where is Peter now. The mob has Jesus in their hands but where are you Simon Peter - you said that all though all men deny him, you would never do it - you would die for him. Where are you now? The record says Peter followed afar off. He did follow - but he was afar off. Most of the Disciples forsook him and fled. And Peter remained on the outskirts of the crowd as they took Jesus before the high priest.

Because it was cold that night, a fire was built in the courtyard. The officers sat by the fire and Peter joined them and warmed himself by the fire of the enemy.

And this was the moment that the tragedy was driving on to completion because presently these men warming themselves by the fire, turned to Simon Peter and asked him some questions.

I cannot read this Scripture text without remembering Dr. Jeff Ray, an old professor of mine at Southwestern Seminary. He told us one time about the incident that happened to him in Caldwell, Texas. There was no ice factory in town and he said, if we had ice it had to be shipped in. And the leading saloon keeper in town

was the only place where ice was supplied. He discovered that his members were buying ice at the saloon and they were sending their children to the saloon. He said I searched the Scriptures that I might give my people a skinning. He said if I had told them to quit buying ice from the saloon, they would have probably forced me to leave the church. He said I prepared a sermon on the passage of Scripture in Luke 22. And I talked about Peter's gradual steps downward. He said I used an outline like this. First, his over-confidence. Second, his shameful indifference. Third, his carnal dependence. Fourth, his following afar off. And fifth, choosing-wicked associates. Sixth, warming by the Devil's fire. He said I bore down heavily on dear old Peter. For being willing to enjoy the luxury of a warm fire furnished by the enemies of Jesus. I gave Peter no quarter for being willing to warm by the enemies fire. When I saw that my audience was thoroughly committed, to the shameful inconsistency of such, he said I said very quietly - my brethren, is it any worse for a Jerusalem Christian to warm by the enemies fire than for a Caldwell Christian to cool by the enemies ice. After a few brief sentences of amplification of the idea, I offered the suggestion that if we had to have ice, we could get someone to handle it. And we wouldn't have to send our children to a saloon. He said that in less than a week, Uncle Charlie Brawless, who was kin to John A. Brawless, began carrying ice in connection to his meat market. And he says we live happily everafter. But I think he had a point - warming by the Devil's fire. Certainly this is the thing that many people are guilty today in the age in which we live.

I Tell Young People Choose your friends wisely - some will pull

Life is a warfare. And when you warm by the Devil's fire - sooner or later you are going to be trapped just as Simon Peter.

You Down & laugh at you !!

Drink-Drugs -

III. WICKEDNESS - V. 56-59

Now Peter had followed afar off and he was here warming by the Devil's fire.

And we come to the moment of wickedness and denial which are made. About an hour had passed and somebody pushed a finger in his face. It was a maid. She pointed him out. And she made him a coward. And by and by he saw suspicious eyes turned upon him and he heard them whisper that he was with Jesus and he denied it. Then came the third denial which confirmed that he had never been with Jesus. My friends, this was wickedness on the part of Peter. And let us take care that we don't throw too many stones at Peter. For doing in one day, what we ourselves may have been doing every day we live. Refusing to confess Jesus Christ as our Lord.

V156
" Someone came up to him and said, the men who were standing around the fire - are you one of those Disciples? He said I am not. And then another said, did I not see Thee earlier in the garden with Him. Peter denied that and he added his denial - swearing and cursing.

This is where the wickedness and the shamefulness comes in. Suppose you were in a crowd where people laughed at Jesus, and laughed at his church, and laughed at his Bible. And they would ask you point blank, are you one of the friends of Christ. Do you belong to that church down there on Chesapeake Avenue. What would you say under those conditions. What would your behavior be.

A little earlier Peter said, though all men deny you--I'll die for you before I deny. Think about the weakness of human nature. One denial always seems to call for another.

A young man came in to his pastor once and he says, I was in a company of people where they were roaring and laughing, at the whole idea of Christianity. The pastor asked him, my boy, what did you do. He says I quietly got up and went out and came here where I could talk with you. The pastor said you did the right thing by getting away. What would you have done if they had said, are you not one of Christ's followers? What would you have done. The young man said, well, I hope I would have said, I am

and I am disturbed and troubled by what you are saying and what you are doing. He said, I hope I would have said that.

*The Man Who Was For Sale - Greed - For a Price a Kiss
betrayed Jesus - Judas - Dead End ST -
Marilyn Monroe - unwanted child, foster home - 34 husbands
life a burden - Drugs, alcohol - mid final way out -*

Dear Christian people you are constantly subjected to trials here in this world.

You shall have tribulations. That's why you need to put on the whole armour of God.

*Donald Barnhouse, wife died, 3 children, way turned huge truck
found eating shadow - ask one thing, rather be run over by truck
or shadow? shadow don't hurt, your mother not run over by death but shadow of
Life is no playground - it is a battleground. And we are against the terrible, death
terrible foe. Satan is terrible, in his devices and is hard to defeat. There is nothing fear
Job afflicted boils head to foot - family shamed, turned against -
Friends told - God punishing -*

These early disciples had a hard time. And they had to battle.

I read about Dr. Truitt who was in Europe on a visit. And he met an old man who was a great scholar and a glorious preacher. But he had twice been in a concentration camp and had well nigh starved to death. And he talked about those who had helped him or else he would have perished. He said those enemies would not have cared if he had starved - he says I think that was their intentions. But this old man of God had been beaten with many stripes. And he says I stood before him and he quoted from Paul - "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." And then he waited a moment and he said again, with Paul "I would have you to understand brethren that the things which have happened unto me have fallen out rather to the furtherance of the Gospel." Then the man said, with not a word of protest of bitterness.

That man was doomed never to walk again but to be rolled around in a chair. Would you go through a thing like that. Would I. Would anybody in this church. Would anyone

V. 58

Now Peter did not think of becoming a bad man. He did nothing which the gay world would call bad. The temptations that came in his path met him with music and beauty - song, etc., like many of you.

I want to tell you there is poison in the cup of pleasure. The laws of life and health have been broken many times by unhappy youth who have carried the consequences of their sin and folly to their grave. And they may repent 50 years in sorrow and suffering.

You would gladly surrender all the wealth of this world if you could get back the freshness that you had in your life. But there is no forgiveness that can change the law of eternal providence. That lays the physical consequences of transgression upon the guilty. Now this is a terrible lesson that we have to learn.

One of the reasons why Peter committed this wickedness. I think he was deceived. And that's the thing that happens to people day by day. It is easy, it is inviting.

West Va - No man sick - Never seen wagon - over hill - raised up - saw *rights city night - decided to be hunting* *hard to find whole world* *has gone to Porcupine hunting - Decided*

You take today in our world in which we live. There is much deceit. In art, in painting, in sculpture. In all of this, many have made their way to destruction. Millions of inventive minds, cunning hands have been busy creating facilities to travel downward. They open up the pavement, the pitfalls, and if those who have themselves been delivered from going down to the pit, set up warnings - lift up the voice to cry aloud. There are those who will turn and ridicule them. But there is the glaring advertisement on the most crowded streets of the great cities, there are many doors that are open upon which might quickly be written the sign - destruction made easy.

try to impart something to somebody else - the children would be a thousand times better off without that influence. They are at best following afar off.

V.59

IV

What follows. There is a slackening of zeal. That is following afar off.

Now if I could speak about this in language of today, talk about one's attendance at church, on Sunday. I'd say on Sunday morning - here is a man who looks out to see whether it is wet, or raining. Now this is something he never does on Monday morning. Now I know some of you may smile about this, and it really is amusing.

But I say, God have mercy on you. A man who does this is following afar. Following yes - he said, I will not deny you. But I'll follow afar.

*A Korean woman was singing a solo in English - misunderstood words -
Way she sang the song was "Where He Needs Me, I will Follow"!
X needs you in his great army -*

Now what follows that - if you follow afar from Jesus, you are going to get cold and then you are going to want to warm yourselves. And where are you going to begin. You are going to be warming yourself by the Devil's fire. There are all sorts of fires that the Devil has going on. Well, the first fire of the Devil is - you begin to talk about the narrowness. Now your father did not allow you to play cards. He didn't allow you to go to the theatre. But you are so chilly - you want something to warm you up. And there are scores of people tonight who ought to be tramping to Calvary with Christ. Who are playing with the Devil's fire trying to get warm.

That is what I mean - nothing more and nothing less. What right had Peter at the fire. You say it is a cold night outside. Well, the world knows you. And you can't drop the speech of Jesus at a moment. Your speech will betray you. But you are trying to get a little warmth and work up a little excitement, and a little enthusiasm out in the world. And you know what the worldly person is going to say to you - I thought you were a Christian.

When ought we to draw the line as Christian people. Where the world draws it for us.

Why did these people change Peter with being ⁱⁿ ~~by~~ ~~the~~ ~~Disciples~~?
-16-
His speech - talk with Jesus - from Galilee!

you with him in the garden. The wickedness - he had been warmed by the Devil's fire.
And now the wickedness had taken him.

IV. THE WEEPING - V. (60-62)

V. 60
The last part - and immediately while he had spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the words of the Lord. How he had said unto him, before the cock crew, thou shalt deny me thrice. "And Peter went out and wept bitterly." That is why I called this point weeping. Weeping! What an awful plight. But mind you when the cock crew, Peter remembered. Before the cock shall crow twice, thou shalt deny me three times. And he went out, the Bible says, and he wept bitterly. There is your Christian.

V. 62
V. 31-32
(If) he had not been a Christian, he would have said, go on - what do I care. I must take care of myself. *Means He left the trial - wept - sobbing - contrition of spirit - Broken - grief over betrayal. The fall of a strong man is a tragedy; The Recovery... " " " Triumph!*
V. 31-32 Equipped to strengthen the Brethren - Pentecost demonstrates genuine Recovery!
Here is a heart-broken man over his wicked conduct. And it is not amazing how

a Christian can stray from the right path - how far and still be a Christian. We should not judge too hastily. The behavior here is the illustration of the good man. And he has gone afar off. But my friends, he has come back with weeping. And there is going to be confession.

V. 33
I read about a woman once who attended a party where they were making light of the church, and they were making fun of preachers. One Christian woman who was present said, you are silent. You are not saying anything. You're not even laughing. She replied, I'm not amused, I am heart-sick. I have heard here - and I am not much of a Christian, but I am a Christian. And I love Christ and I have trusted my eternal salvation to him who died for me. And in the past few minutes, this has been one of the

Last week - Visit Dept off W-center - lady mother husband and
I stepped up, hands on wheel chair - steady - struggling - looked up
of help you, Larry inside out of weather - Dark car - long wait, hot food
To get back to him and walk with him, and talk with him. And let him lead you so
St Miller - went ahead - nurse station - situated
that your heart may burn in fellowship with Him. Are you among the number who have
she came - gratitude - husband stroke 15 yrs ago - lost - why talk etc
neglected prayer. Are you doing less work for God than you were some time ago.

Are you neglecting your devotion to him. Lawrence Riley - 80 yr old - Army Miss
worked as Associate in large Baptist Central Miss. Visited several Nursing Homes
weekly - Bible reading Prayer daily - lost her mind - trying but - Black stare not talk -
Father - Mother - visited each other - you - By bed Bro Riley decided instead
Talking - started singing "Jesus loves me this I know, for the
Bible tells me so" - "I didn't, lady turned to Bro Riley
Put her arm around his neck, said, "Bro Riley
"I know Jesus loves me cause you do" The lady not
insane, freed someone to know that she was loved.

Boy Star - Ed. Mr. Rubenston - Brilliant Student minor
I don't want them come - immersion in when people love, lives are
changed & that is glorified.
Peter looked & heard the cock
Knew Jesus loved him.

St. John helps - "Oh my Boy I'm proud of you"
John 21:15-17 "Some days later on
Peter (Do you love me)
John could have said "I never loved you" Peter "Do you love me"

abundant church struggle - Brass figure of tomb!
Workman fell accidentally fell head being deep - landed on top of
a tomb, saved his life, killed tomb. Statute erected
"so all pass by might know the story!"
Peter - Became Rock - and said I love you - Tradition
"Crucified -
Bible Waterloo - Man Cathedral London signal to people - Fog
Wellington Spotted - Fog killed - W. Spotted Napoleon!
Time Calvary - Message No hope & Defeated!
But Fog 3 days rolls away " " Death! " Victory over
Dark grave -

most unhappy experiences that has ever come to me. And I am going to leave this group. And she walked out.

Now that woman did exactly right, she behaved with dignity and self-control.

Later, one of the other women looked her up and said - "your behavior is one of the most terrible rebukes I have ever had. And I deserved it all."

Should there ever be any circumstances under which a Christian denies Christ.

Our confession is not limited to one confession, when we join and unite with the church. But our public confession should be a daily one. Confess Him everywhere and in the right spirit. We should tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We should not hide our lights under a bushel.

A loss of perspective, Eve saw the Tree good to eat - For hidden fruit taken - The Command of God forgotten - Goodness forgotten Paul "The good which I want to, I fail to do Rom 7:19 Fall short glory God"

You remember when Adam and Eve were in the garden and the beautiful fruit was there. And how the sorrow that followed - steps that they had taken. Let me urge upon you tonight that it costs an effort to be watchful. For the sake of God, and Heaven, Eternal Salvation - the highest and the best. Do not allow yourself to be carried away and lost in the landscape of denying Jesus Christ. If you have been wandering afar off in a distance from Christ, your only hope is to immediately return. And God will forgive you - wherever you have been, whatever you have done.

Or left undone. Have you denied him.

Jer 18:4 Experience - To Pottery House - Vessel making out of clay + bricks - Start again, remolding - God reclaim(s) wasted lives, gives hope

Peter's home coming was great and you can come home tonight. You may have gone a long way - you may be as far off in denying him as Peter was. Where are you - ace yourself tonight. Are you warming at the Devil's fire. Have you lost your r to witness. Are you at a distance from Jesus tonight. I wonder if you want

Let me tell you something, the worldly man has a very keen and accurate estimate of what the Christian ought to be. This may be over so. But if you want to know what a Christian ought to be, you go to that little maid and she says really, I thought you were a Christian.

Now God have mercy on you. That's a great moment of peril. And you might adopt the method of this age, but the blasphemy was the expression of his nature. If he had remained true to Christ, he never would have denied him and there never would have been that wickedness.

Now some of you tonight have drifted away from the nearness that you used to have. You have gotten away from the audiences of Christ. And the friends of our Lord. And may God have mercy on you for denying and committing this wickedness.

Shall move
I read about a minister, an evangelist, who was a winner of souls. But a friend found him one day and he was in a public house praying for some cause just for a pint of beer. Well, you'd say, I'll never do that. I'd never sink to that level. But you know what the Bible says, "let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Now why did these people charge Peter with being one of Christ's Disciples. Three different times the question - the girl said, and the men around the fire said, three times are you one of His. Why did they think that he was one of the group.

Well, for one thing, his speech betrayed him.

The second thing, one of them saw him with Jesus in the garden. Did I not see

upon a different track. And they will go on from slight beginnings to great extremes. Great gulf of separation. The first step in the valley of course is easy. You can either take it or you can avoid it. But whosoever takes that step, of warming by the Devil's fire, will take the next and will become a part of wickedness.

Lack of prayer will lead one in this way. You need to burn your bridges behind you. And you dare not walk down certain streets after you have broke with evil. You need to set your face toward following Jesus Christ. But you are beginning to frequent the old paths now. And you are not quite so watchful as you were. You excuse your lack of watchfulness. The man who is sure that he is safe and ceases to watch and gives up on prayer in his life, is falling already.

What follows this. You have zeal without knowledge. The church today is cursed with zeal without knowledge. This is an age of fussy-fever minded multitudes of people who are attempting to over-take the lack of spiritual life by some sort of activity.

A young lady once said that I feel my Christian life is at a very low ebb. I feel there is a distance between me and my Lord. I do not know how to improve matters. Do you think it would be good for me to take a Sunday School Class? The pastor replied a thousand times no in the name of God leave the children alone until you are right with God yourself. I think that is the same thing that expresses itself. That people who want, who have a deeper spiritual life, they need first of all to get it themselves. Now you cannot make up by doing what you lack in being. This is the great problem in the Sunday School work today. The Sunday School Teachers who do not and are not right with God themselves. Some of them never attend worship of God. They come to the Sunday School and they leave. And this is not right. And they

As we think about the crowded conditions in the city, and domestic life, and the needless way in which youth cross the boundaries of morality. And on the one side there is hope and light and heaven. And on the other side there is darkness, despair, and death.

There are voices that are calling. Riches and power, inventions, pride, and passion are enlisted in the bad work for making the broad way easy and attractive. For wickedness - to get people to go in the wrong direction. No wonder if a young man fails to pray and to watch and take heed - how he carries himself, will soon find himself denying his Lord.

Be sure of the voice which persuades you to a lower standard, is not the voice of a friend.

The steps of sin come into your ear and lead to the pit. It happens very easily.

It is like the lake in the Alps - a small lake where a snowflake falls. There are two little channels that go out of that lake and go to different oceans. One portion goes out to the winding Rhine and goes forth to the stormy waves of the northern seas. Another joins the bleak currents of Rhone and finds its way to the Mediterranean. Going by the vine clad hills and the sunny vales of France. And under the Italian skies - down to the Islands of Greece. So small is that mountain lake that a single snowflake, falling upon it's surface, dissolving in the water, may supply a portion of these mighty rivers. For different parts of the same drop - to a different place on the globe.

So there are many things that comes into a man's life or a families life. That may bring them joy forever and ever. And yet there are other things that will set them

who is listening to me. If the test were ours just as it was in the case of this man. There are many cases I think like this in the Near East and in the world today. But the Christian people have been suffering and undergoing for Christ in the foreign lands.

Being a Christian is a great calling. And living for Christ is a challenge.

This is a sad story to be told of a generous, brave, and warm-hearted man. And this story ought to inspire every heart to daily prayer. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

How often do we go out from even the worship period inspired and it is not long before something says deny your Lord. How many people go out from home into the great conflict of life with strong intentions. He goes from a good Christian home with the blessings of Christian parents. He goes with a solemn lesson of what he has been taught in his mind. The honor of his father. The love of his mother. The affection of his sister. And his own generous impulses. He sees the right path and he means to pursue it. His convictions, judgements, purposes are right.

He goes to a great city and he plunges into the mighty stream where hundreds and thousands of people are struggling for life. It takes a strong swimmer to keep his head above the waves. He meets with some that are good and true. But he meets with many that are bad and false. For awhile he holds his own. But he does not openly commit himself on the side of God for righteousness and there is where he makes his first great mistake. He was not quite there to say that I mean to live by prayer, by watching, by Christian duty, by the word of God. When he is in enticed to pursue some evil course - he does not refuse without doubt. He hesitates. Because it is something that a Christian should not do. It will lead him to where Christians should not go.

But evil men find ways to tempt him and to shame him, and to put him down, and by and by it is found that this earnest young man has lost his character and his virtue and his peace of mind. And it is a sad story. He has fallen by the way of wickedness. He has denied his Lord. He followed these steps - this false boasters of evil things. He let down his high standard - he consented to be led by those whom he mistrusted and despised. And who mocked him. He went where he could not expect to meet the pure and the good. And so he degraded himself and he has become worthless and heartless. He has become useless and disappointed. There is no plan nor purpose in his life. He hesitated when he was first tempted. He may have said with Peter, I won't deny you. I'll die for you. But he did not later ~~say~~ say, I believe. And when he was asked to join the evil practice later on, he did not say, no never.

That's the saddest defeat that a young man permits his high standards to be pulled down and trampled by immorality.

My plea for young people tonight is that your conscience - if you lose everything else, keep your heart pure. And God will keep you in the dark night of temptation. He will keep you when the denial comes up and raises his head. Millions wonder and fall to rise no more.

When asked to go where you cannot go, to do what you cannot do with a good conscience and a pure heart, do not hesitate to look the temptor firmly into the face and say I love and fear the great God in Heaven, and I am not going to dishonor and disobey him, for the fear or favor of any man on this earth. I love truth, I love purity, and I am not going to soil my conscience, with a thing that will make my death bed terrible. If every young person could have faith like that and act upon words like this, they would not be wretched and hopeless in old age.