

to the main door, and asked the door keeper if he might admit his friend. Now how long he waited there we do not know. And naturally this (servant) knowing John, had admitted his friend who was standing without, and with the consent of the doorkeeper brought in Peter. But we notice here that the (maid) who kept the door immediately scrutinized Peter, and either because he was a friend of John's who she knew to be a disciple of Jesus. Or, just by reason of suspecting that he was a disciple, questioned him on that point. Therefore, the kindness of the disciple getting him into the high priest's home proved to be (a real temptation.)

We note here the attack on him. It was a maid, so small, and yet she challenged him. She only asked him (carelessly) "Art not thou one of this man's disciples." As we would say in verse 17, "Thou art not I suppose one of this man's disciples." And Peter answered, "I am not." So we see that the doorkeeper was the first one to

## WARNING BY THE DEVIL'S FIRE

John 18:15-26

### Introduction

John is telling a story, and I would like for us to think of it in terms of an eye witness account as he continues to relate to us the incident of the trial of Jesus. In his story containing these verses, we see first he gives a glimpse of Simon Peter, then he becomes interested in relating the trials of Jesus and then he comes back again in a closing part to Peter and his final denial of Jesus.

### I. Peter v. 15-18

Peter's kindness to Christ here is that he followed Jesus when he was led away. Though at first he fled with the rest of them, yet afterwards he took heart a little and followed at (some distance) calling to mind the (promise) he had made to adhere to him whatever it should cost him. Those that had followed Jesus in the midst of the honors, and shared with Him in these honors, when people cried



"Hosanna" to Him, ought to have followed him now in the midst of these reproachs.

God is here giving us the (action in progress.) The writer recalls a scene, thereby paints for us a mental picture out of the fountain of his memory. Though, all of the disciples had fled at the arrest of Jesus, Peter soon regained courage and returned and followed Him. As they led him to the palace of the high priest.

V15 In verse (15) he states, "So did another disciple." I believe that he is modest here in making this statement, because he is speaking of himself.

When they arrive here at the high (priest's office) we discover that Peter stood outside and could not go in. He was waiting for an opportunity to get nearer. Thus, when we meet with opposition in following Christ, we must show our good will.

Then we discover that the disciple received kindness and as John states here, as he speaks of himself as another disciple, who has been known to the high priest. Some writers say that he had had different (dealings) with the high priest, others feel that perhaps John and the fisherman

had furnished the high priest with fish. We do not know about these, these are only probabilities. But we certainly see (no reason) why John or one of the other twelve disciples could not have had such knowledge of the high priest in or ob knowing him in this way. There were lots of (other believers) in Jerusalem such as Nicodemus, or Joseph of Arimathea, who had known the high priest, and had knowledge of him, as well as these immediate disciples close to Christ. As there are many disciples who had known the priest we do not think that it is out of the ordinary that one of them, who had been an acquaintance, was able to invite Peter in and introduce him. But it at least gave him the opportunity to come in and listen to the trial.

The (statement) that he went into the court of the high priest with Jesus, and the statement that he obtained the admission of Peter, his acquaintance was such, as to account for his doing these things. Hence, it implies some degree of personal respect and regard on the part of the high priest.

Evidently when (John entered) and looked about he discovered that Peter was not with them following, so he went back



a warm fire, furnished by the enemy of Jesus. I gave Peter no quarter for being willing to warm by the enemies' fire. When I saw that I had my audience thoroughly committed to the shameful inconsistency of such a think, I said very quietly, "But 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 amplifying the idea, I offered the suggestion that if we had to have ice, we'd get someone to handle it so we would not have to send our children to a salon after it. In less than a week, one of our deacons, Uncle Charley Broaddus, who was a kinsman of John A. Broaddus, who was carrying ice in connection with his meat market, and we lived happily ever after.

I believe, Uncle Jeff, as we affectionately called him while in school, had a point of warming by the devils' fire. And certainly this is a thing that many are guilty of today.

question him. We do not know what John thought about his friend, who heard this first denial.

Now Peter would have certainly been (alarmed if Malchus) had confronted him instead and said, "This is the man who cut off my ear. I will have his head for it." But it was only a maid asking him this question, and how speedily Peter surrendered and said, "I am not."

But perhaps he was thinking about his own safety, and how he could secure himself, when he said, "I am not"

v. 18

We see that he (warmed by the devils fire) Peter goes in and he stands with these men, among the servants of high priest and others who gathered here. It was cold. They cared not what became of Christ. Amos 6:6

We see how Peter herded himself with them, and was made one among them. It was bad enough that he did not go up to the end of the hall and appear in Jesus' behalf. The other disciples, who could none of them get in to hear the



trial might well have received this information from Peter. We think how his heart must have been full of grief and concern. It was much worse that he joined himself with those who that were against his Master. He stood with them and warmed himself. This was a poor excuse for joining them. A little while later we shall see the results of this.

A little thing like (bad company) will certainly ruin one's influence. Because he associated with these wicked men, and kept company with them, doubtless, they were diverting themselves to the persecution of Christ, and what sort of entertainment was this to Peter. Yet he might have been off in a corner weeping, for his Master who was suffering.

Because he desires to be thought one of them, that he might not be suspected to be a disciple of Christ. The (night was cool) because of that time of the year in Palestine. The nights were a little chilly, and in the dim court there was a charcoal fire with dark shadows moving along on the walls. There was just sufficient light for one to reveal the features of a man's face. Peter seems to be indifferent

to the trial, and he takes his place by the fire.

(Dr. Jeff B. Ray) who was an old professor at Southwestern Seminary, told about the time when he was pastor at 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 salon keeper in the town was the one who supplied ice for the rest of the town. And he said that he discovered that my members were buying ice from the salon. They were sending their children to the salon for it. And he said I had to search for some scripture somewhere that I might give my people a skinning. He said, "If I had told them to quit buying ice from the salon, they would have probably forced me to leave the church." They said I prepared a expository sermon on the 22nd Chapter of Luke on the theme, Peter's gradual steps downward to the depths of denying his Lord. He said I used an outline something like this. First, over self-confidence; second, shameful indifference; third, carnal dependence; fourth, following afar off; fifth, choosing wicked associates; and six warming by the enemies' fire. He said, "I bore down heavily on dear old Peter, for being willing to enjoy the luxury of



First, as to the manner of his preaching. He spoke openly with freedom and plainness, He did not deliver things in secret, but He did not try to undermine the nation, or spread corruption in the nation. Christ explains himself fully.

Second, as to the person. He preached, he spoke to the world, to all that had ears to hear, were willing to hear, high and low, learned and unlearned, Jew and Gentile, friend and foe.

Third, as to the places that he preached in when he was in the country, he preached ordinarily in the synagogue the places of meeting for worship and on the Sabbath day. The time of meeting when he came up to Jerusalem, he preached the same doctrine to the temple, and the solemn feast. Preached in private homes, on the mountain, by the seaside, and yet what he preached in private was the very thing that he had delivered publicly. We must note that the doctrines of Christ, purely and plainly preached, need not be ashamed

## II. Jesus v. 19-23

While Peter is now denying Jesus, we find that the enemies and the high priest are accusing Jesus. At first they seemed to try to tempt him as a false teacher of false doctrine. In verse 19, they examine him concerning <sup>V. 19</sup> his disciples and his doctrine.

They try to prove some irregularity of the process. It was against all law that they should seize him as a criminal and now that he is their prisoner, they have nothing to lay to his charge. The intention of the High Priest was to get some charge against him, because he wanted to prove that he was an enemy of public good. He examined him concerning his disciples that he might charge him with sedition, and represent him as dangerous, to the Roman government, as well as to the Jewish church. He asked him who were his disciples, what number they were, of what country, and what were their names and what kind of characters they were. What is now becoming of them all, where are they, why do they not appear here. And they upbraided him for the disciples being cowards in deserting him.

Concerning his doctrine that they might charge him



with heresay, and bring a penalty of the law against him as a false prophet, backing up Deut. 13:9&10 and also Deut. 17:12. Therefore if prophets could not perish but at Jerusalem, where that court sat, they could not prove any false doctrine. Isaiah 29:21. They said nothing to him concerning his miracles, nothing to him about his good works, nothing to him about his doctrines being contradictions. They were adversaries, of Christ. They (quarreled with his truth.) They shut their eyes to his providences.

We see here that John turns our thought now as he was standing close by from the group surrounding Peter, to the group surrounding Jesus. And he gives to us a remarkably simple and vivid description of what they were asking Jesus.

v. 20

Christ made an answer to these questions. To his disciples he said nothing because it was an impertinent

question, His doctrine was sound and good. His having disciples to whom to communicate it, and to practice it certainly was clear. He would say nothing to condemn them and they could say nothing to justify them.

As to his doctrine he said nothing in particular, but referred himself to those that heard him, being not only made manifest to God, but made manifest also to the conscience. He charged his judges with (illegal preceding) He does not, indeed, speak evil of the rulers, or of the people, but he appeals to the settled rules of their own court. Whether they dealt fairly by him, do you indeed judge righteously. So here, why ask you me, Which implies two errors in their judgment. First, why ask you, me now concerning my doctrine, when you have already condemned it. They had condemned it before they had heard, or even given him a chance. Second, why ask ye me, must I convict myself, you, you have no evidence against me.

He entered into a fair and open dealing with them upon the publication of his doctrines. The crime which the judges were about to enact was against the law. Deuteronomy 13:6. And therefore Jesus proceeds to clear himself fully.



priest in drawing from him some expression that will be used to be turned against him as a reproach. And so they were trying to find out something to be able to pin upon Him.

Verse 22. While the Judge is examining Him, no servants thereby, were somewhat irritated, because they could find no fault with him, and we see that they abused him. One fellow nearby (struck him.) He gave him a blow with a rod or with his open hand. This is a fulfillment of the scripture, Isaiah 1:6, or Micah 5:1 "They shall strike the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek." This is also a type answered in Joel 16:10. They have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully. It was unjust to strike one who had done nothing to him.

He said, "Answers thou the high priest in such a way. (Is this a good way to speak to the high priest.) Some of them have suggested that it was Malchus, who even

to appear in the most numerous assemblies, or to be carried in secret.

And as to (doctrine itself) he said nothing in secret, contrary to what He said in public. But only the way he said, "A repetition in secret, I have said nothing." He sought no corners, for he feared no colors, nor said anything he need feel ashamed of. When he did speak in private to his disciples, he ordered them to proclaim on the (housetops) Matthew 10:27. Isaiah & Deuteronomy 30:11.

He (appeals to them that have heard him) and desires that they might re-examine what doctrines he preached, or whether he had that dangerous tendency that was here set forth. In other words, he said, "Ask any impartial hearer, ask your own officers." Some writers think that he even pointed to some of those who were present, at this time in the high priest's office. And behold they know what I said. The doctrines of Christ may safely appeal to all that know it, and has so much right and reason on its side.

V.21 So in verse 21, Jesus offers no apology for the statements that he is making. He only objects to the high



Sea of Galilee, when Peter left his fishing boat and waded ashore to meet Jesus. And Jesus questioned him, "Lovest thou me." Or if we could follow this event that John is now talking about, and come to the (day of Pentecost,) when we shall hear his great sermon, and witness the people who are converted. Or, we could take a journey with him as they walked to the gate beautiful of the temple and healed a lame man. Or we could spend some time in Herold's prison, at midnight, where he is bound with chains, as the church prays for him to be delivered. We would think of great hours. But now we are in the midst of a real temptation, as John reveals it for us. First, a maid had asked him about it, and then another had asked him, concerning the knowledge of Christ. We know that today we can say, "Though all should forsake thee, yet will not I." Today we can sing, "I am thine O Lord", but tomorrow we deny the Christ within us and say, "I never knew it." "Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?"

The preacher in the pulpit may hear that voice, "Did not I see thee, speaking in his name?" The singer in the choir, "Did not we hear you singing his praises?" The

owed Christ the healing of his ear. But whoever it was, he had done it to please the high priest. The wicked ruler, used these wicked servants. You remember on one occasion in Acts 23:2, that Paul received such a blow.

V. 23 Christ here has a wonderful expression of (meekness and patience.) "What I have now said, there witness of evil. Let them judge of it who are the proper judges. Why smitest thou me?" Christ could have answered him with a miracle of wrath, could have struck him dumb or dead, he could have withered his hand that had been lifted up against him, but insted of that, He was very patient. (We too) many times will receive blows and a second blow and will often have to seek to avoid quarels. Our resentment of injuries done unto us must always be rational, and never passionate. Such as Christ here when he suffered. The reason that he did not smite them, when we are called out to suffer, we must do so in



patience, as He would have us to do.

V. 24 It seems that Annas, has sent him to Caiaphas for further investigation, probably it was just across the court, as their offices or apartments, must have been very near.

### III. Peter v. 24 - 26

Now (John in telling his story) comes back again to Simon Peter, as he completes the story about his warming by the devils' fire. He comes back again to the denial and the temptations which he had while standing there in the court, warming himself, literally standing and warming. He was taking no part in the formal trial of Jesus. Several persons were perhaps there in the group and we read that in verse 26 that one of the kinsmen came to him and asked him the question. To find one who was a kinsman to the man, who perhaps had his (ear cut off), who had been there in the garden.

"Did not I see you in the Garden?" This was a powerful temptation to Peter, and because this man not only suspected it, but he felt confident that he had seen Peter in the garden. And furthermore, he had witnessed Peter drawing the sword, and using it, and therefore, had seen that Peter was in trouble here now. This man no doubt, was kin to Malchus, because the circumstances indicated such.

We see here that he denied him again. That sin, in general, hardens the heart. Hebrews 3:13. So the beginning of sin is letting a little water in, and then soon it breaks down the fence, and covers the whole territory. And so one sin, such as the sin of lying is one that is fruitful, and because one lie must be told to support another, and before long one is in deep trouble.

If we should but take a brief (glance backward) and see Peter and Caesarea, when he did not, he said that Jesus was the Son of God. For we go back on that stormy night, on Galilee, when he tried to walk on the sea. Or we climb the mount of transfiguration, when there he visited with Moses and Eliah, or we visit with him by the



deacon in the church, "Did not we witness you as a church officer?" The Sunday school teacher, "Did not we see thee in a Sunday school class, telling about Jesus?"

And then to hear such a denial when they say, "I never knew Him." Are you denying the Lord in your Business, or home? live & Act as though you never knew Jesus!

But now we come to, as John tells us, the part where Peter was convicted and its such a simple, ordinary happening in the natural world. The cock crows, the cock proclaims the coming of the morning. Yet that crowing of the cock is a part that played a definite part in his conviction. It was not the first time, or the last time that some simple incident, some little something that happened, that caused God to speak to a soul. It might have been a book, a picture, a child's folded dress, a jewel, a house, a room, a mountain, a river. And yet the crowing of the cock was sufficient to work conviction in the heart of Peter.

How could the Lord deal with him any more? Faithful, a liar, denied the Lord -  
Bad for disciples of Lord come to place he thinks he is finished  
Jesus sent them special word - He had work for him  
The complete accomplishment of the conviction, was in to do.

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the look of Jesus, when Christ, bound, bleeding from the blow, turned and looked upon Jesus as he was being led through the halls. The cock crew, when the cock crew denial rang out in the midnight air, and we discover that the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. If we only could realize what was in the look of Christ, that turned Peter from this sinful course, and changed his life.

If we today but could recognize the look of Christ upon a heart, might lift some soul out of hell, and set someone on the way to heaven. It was a look of wounded love. God spared us all that his love might be trampled upon, and yet, this look was a look of appeal. The ever seeking and all forgiving love.

It was John Newton, the slave dealer, who wrote the hymn, "I saw one hanging On a Tree, in agonies, who fixed his languid eyes on me and near his cross I stood." Sure, never til my latest breath, can I forget that look. It seemed to change me with his death, though not a word he spoke." A look of Jesus awakened Peter.

Father & Mother - plain people, small income, sacrifice to send boy to university; the last year they write John when do you graduate? we can not both afford to come but your father wants to come up; what is the deal?  
The Boy a Great Star, editor of University Publication,

Brilliant speaker in student union. He said, I do not think I want him to come. So I'll not answer his letter. Father says to mother, He must be busy with exams. So father goes up in his plain clothes meets him so with some other men & injures to see his fine looking boy, much better dressed than the father. He goes lovingly, "Oh my son I am proud of you". son looks at him & says, "I am sorry, but I do not know you". The father would just as soon die - Peter said "I know him".

And Peter went out and wept bitterly. I suppose it was as Adam and Eve, going out of the garden of Eden, lost in tears, \_\_\_\_\_ over their wrong doing, and suffering the evils of this world. The tears that were falling, because he denied to a \_\_\_\_\_ and he wept so over his sin. The Bible is one book that will lead men to weep over their sins.

Many people need to go out and weep because of their sins. It was a dark night, and it was a bitter night, and yet, somehow I feel that Peter was salvaged from destruction, because of the prayers of Jesus, because Jesus had prayed for him. And today there are those who have had people pray for them, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, wives and others, but above all we know that Christ intercedes for us. Peter did not fail because faith will not fail. And there was a forgiving, redeeming, cleansing, restoring power of Christ.



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