

Peter's Denial**John 13:31-38; Luke 22:31-34; Matthew 26:36-46; John 18:1-27; Luke 22:54-62**

Memory Verse: *"Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."* Matt. 26:41 (ESV)

Background Helps:

We continue the events of Holy Week with the sad story of Peter's denial. The narrative begins in the upper room at the Last Supper; continues in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed in great agony; and concludes in the courtyard of the high priest, where Peter disowns his Lord.

Lesson Helps:

A possible lesson aim: My students will learn about the story of Peter's threefold denial, so that they will take steps to avoid and overcome temptation in their own lives.

In youth and adult classes, this lesson is ideal for an in-depth Bible study. Use most or all of the Scriptures that are listed above to consider the temptation and fall of Peter.

Possible discussion questions:



- (1) What were the contributing factors to Peter's fall? How might these same factors contribute to failure in our own lives?
- (2) At each point in the story (in the upper room, in Gethsemane, in the courtyard of the high priest), what different steps could Peter have taken to avoid or overcome temptation? What steps can we take to avoid or overcome temptation?
- (3) What brought Peter to repentance? How was Peter's sorrow after his denial of Jesus different from Judas' sorrow after his betrayal of Jesus? (See 2 Cor. 7:10.)

In children's classes, an effective approach might be that of story-telling, with the teacher highlighting the stages by which Peter became more and more vulnerable to temptation, leading ultimately to his fall. (See Forecast, Week 2 for storytelling tips.) Then discuss the story, using some of the same *application* questions given above.

In all classes be sure to work the memory verse into your lesson time (Matt. 26:41).

You might want to end your lesson on a positive note, reviewing Jesus' prayer for and promise of Peter's recovery in Luke 22:31-34. Next week we will study the encouraging story of Peter's restoration.

Home Assignment:

-  Read John 20:1-10 (Luke 24:12); Mark 16:1-7; Luke 24:33-35; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; John 21:1-25.
-  Memorize James 4:10.