



TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by. When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him. “You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus,” she said. But he denied it. “I don’t know or understand what you’re talking about,” he said, and went out into the entryway. When the servant girl saw him there, she said again to those standing around, “This fellow is one of them.” Again he denied it. After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, “Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.” He began to call down curses, and he swore to them, “I don’t know this man you’re talking about.” Immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: “Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

Mark 14:66-72

The people you meet: There’s no denying it

Mike and Jack had known each other since preschool. You could follow their history through a series of pictures tucked into photo albums. Mike and Jack in a blanket fort. Mike and Jack on the same Little League team. Both boys were pretty nervous about their first day of freshman year, but at least they had each other. As they got on the bus, an upperclassman burst out laughing when he saw Mike’s Pokémon shirt. For a split second Jack made eye contact with Mike...and then began pointing and laughing too. Every man for himself. Mike trudged to the back of the bus.

Peter wasn’t going to be like that. He vowed to Jesus that he would never deny him. All these other clowns might run away, but not Peter. He had embarrassed himself when Jesus was arrested, but here was a second chance! He would have Jesus’ back during the trial! Instead Peter found himself cursing to prove that he had never met Jesus.

God gives us opportunities to stand with Jesus. But sometimes that’s very hard. It’s embarrassing to be known as a Christian when everyone around you is pro-choice. It’s hard to stand up when everyone else passionately believes that people should be free to marry whomever they want. It’s hard to be bold when everyone else in the classroom is laughing adoringly at the professor who uses his razor sharp wit to mock those who believe in creation. Denying Jesus makes so much sense when it means we get to be like everyone else. I don’t want to be the weird guy in the courtyard who knows Jesus. It’s easier to pretend I’ve never met him.

It’s important to recognize that Jesus knew all of this was going to happen. His march to the cross didn’t depend on Peter’s faithfulness, but on Jesus’ unconditional love. Jesus went to die *in spite of* Peter and *for* Peter. In the hour of our most desperate need, Jesus refused to deny us. Instead the Father’s face turned away from his Son. Our sin separated them, and Jesus’ death made it possible to truly know God intimately.

Like Peter, God comes to find us at rock bottom. Peter’s bitter tears were precisely what he needed at the moment. A broken man crumpled in the courtyard, ready to hear about forgiveness.

This week think about how you can proudly show your connection to Christ no matter what consequences may come. When you fail and perhaps find bitter tears streaking down your face, lean into your repentance. Meet Jesus, as Peter did in John 21, and find forgiveness for all your denial. Celebrate the fact that God knows you; there’s no denying it.

Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, we are very grateful that we meet you at the cross. Transform our hearts through the means of grace that we find forgiveness at rock bottom and celebrate our connection to you. Amen.