

## **Series - A Walk with Christ to the Cross**

### **Failure Doesn't Have to be Final.**

## **Peter - The Face of a Determined Disciple**

### **John 18**

**Introduction:** If you're an average person, according to one study, you will make about 70 conscious decisions every day. That's 25,550 decisions a year. Over the course of your lifetime, that will be almost two million decisions. You put all that together, and basically that's your life.

Decisions are so influential and so important. It leads to this other fact about decisions and decision-making. It's the sobering truth that we've all made bad decisions. In fact, regardless of whether you're a believer or not, everybody I know wants to make great decisions, but the reality is we've made bad decisions, decisions we wish we could take back, decisions we wish we could undo.

Have you ever thought, "If I could just go back and do that again? If I could just go back and say that again. If I could just go back and do something different. If I could just go back and walk a different way."

The most difficult thing about our bad decisions is that we can't go back and change them. The reality is you can't go back. You can't change the past. If I can't go back and undo that decision, what are we supposed to do?

Some people might tell you, "Just get over it. Just move on. Just forget about it. It's in the past. It'll just simply go away." Some people will say, "Just try to be a really good person." That doesn't seem to work either.

Last week we began a sermon series called, "**A Walk with Christ to the Cross.**" And what I want to focus on are the some key events in the last hours before Jesus was crucified. And there are three main people we see in these key events. We see faces of failure of the faith in the lives of **Judas**, *the disillusioned follower, who we looked at last week*, **Peter**, *the determined disciple*, and **Pilate**, *the pathetic and political decision-maker.*

If you have your Bible, turn to John chapter 18. The title of today's message is **Failure Doesn't Have to Be Final.**

We're going to look at Peter. It's kind of interesting that we know about Peter's failure. He denies Jesus three times. But we don't attach that failure to him for the rest of his life. We tend to do that with Thomas, don't we? How do people know Thomas, ***doubting Thomas***?

We don't call Peter denying Peter, although we all know that was his great failure. But we see Peter break out of that, and we see Peter as the man who stood up in Acts chapter 2 and preached a sermon and 3,000 were saved. We see him stand up and declare boldly that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life to the Sanhedrin, and there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.

On the heels of Judas' betrayal is Peter's denial. Judas was the caboose of the twelve. He's always mentioned last, Judas the betrayer. Peter is always mentioned first in the list of disciples. The caboose betrays Jesus, and the leader denies Him.

### **Let's Pray**

#### **Let me tell you a little about Peter before we get to John 18**

**Background on Peter:** Peter's family lived in the city Bethsaida on the northern shore of the sea of Galilee (John 1:44) but later moved to Capernaum where he and his brother Andrew had a fishing business (Mark 1:21, 29), with James and John as likely partners (Luke 5:10).

Peter's name was originally Simon, which meant "hearing." Peter's name given at birth was Simon Bar-Jonah (Matthew 16:17) which meant Simon, son of Jonah (John 21:15-17). He was brought up in his father's occupation, that of a fisherman (Matthew 4:18). When Jesus first met Simon He gave him another name Peter which in Aramaic was Cephas (1 Corinthians 1:12; 3:22) or "rock."

In Matthew 8:14 we see where Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law, so we do know that he was married, and often took his wife on his apostolic missions (1 Corinthians 9:5). Even though Scripture does not mention it, Clement of Alexandria and Stromateis both mention Peter as having had children.

Peter and his brother Andrew were fishing partners with James and John, the sons of Zebedee (Luke 5:10). This is helpful to understand, as you'll often see Peter, James and John grouped together.

Andrew, Peter's brother, was originally a disciple of John the Baptist. He told his brother that "we have found the Messiah" (John 1:35-41).

Peter authored two of the books in the New Testament, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter.

Jesus Christ predicted Peter's future and foretold how he would die (John 21:18-19). Christ's own words indicated that Peter would be martyred.

The Bible itself doesn't tell us how Peter died. The most accepted tradition says that Peter was crucified upside down. This tradition explains that Peter requested this form of martyrdom because he had denied Jesus and felt he was not worthy to die as Jesus had died.

Peter had 5 amazing events happen as highpoints in his life:

1. He walked on Water, Mt. 14;
2. His Great Confession that Jesus is the Christ Mt. 16:16;
3. On Mt. of Transfiguration, Mt. 17:1;
4. Saw Demonized Boy Delivered, Mt. 17;
5. Catch fish with Coin in Mouth, Mt. 17:21.

You just must love Peter! He had good intentions but was always fumbling and bumbling and impulsive. Herein lies the paradox of Peter. One moment he was saying and doing the right things, and other times his humanity would emerge.

It's interesting that when Peter allowed his brash, impetuous, impulsive, and overeager actions to take control of his life then Jesus usually called him "Simon." For example, he was called Simon when he did not believe Jesus would help him catch fish (Luke 5:5), when Jesus predicted he would betray him three times (Luke 22:31-32), in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:37-38) and when Jesus reinstated him to service (John 21:15-19).

When he allowed his faith in Christ to be in control, he was usually called Peter to describe the person he was trying to become: the rock and future leader of the early church (Matthew 16:17-20). Even though Peter vacillated between sin and righteousness he was still called and became the leader of the church.

Peter's greatest failure is recorded in all four gospels. Let's look how John tells the story in John chapter 18, beginning in verse 12.

Jesus is arrested. *"Then the detachment of soldiers with its commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They bound him <sup>13</sup>and brought him first to Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest that year. <sup>14</sup>Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man died for the people.*

*<sup>15</sup>Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard, <sup>16</sup>but Peter had to wait outside at the door. The other disciple, who was known to the high priest, came back, spoke to the servant girl on duty there and brought Peter in.*

*<sup>17</sup>"You aren't one of this man's disciples too, are you?" she asked Peter.*

*He replied, "I am not."*

*<sup>18</sup>It was cold, and the servants and officials stood around a fire they had made to keep warm. Peter also was standing with them, warming himself.*

**Notice that John is going back and forth. He talks about the trial part of Jesus, and then he talks about the testing of Peter. And so, we started, in verse 12, with the arrest and the trial of Jesus before Annas, then we shifted to Peter, and now we shift back to Jesus.**

*<sup>19</sup>Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. <sup>20</sup>"I have spoken openly to the world," Jesus replied. "I always taught in synagogues or at the temple, where all the Jews come together. I said nothing in secret. <sup>21</sup>Why question me? Ask those who heard me. Surely, they know what I said." <sup>22</sup>When Jesus said this, one of the officials nearby slapped him in the face. "Is this the way you answer the high priest?" he demanded. <sup>23</sup>"If I said something wrong," Jesus replied, "testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?" <sup>24</sup>Then Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.*

**Now back to Peter**

**25**Meanwhile, Simon Peter was still standing there warming himself. So, they asked him, ***“You aren’t one of his disciples too, are you?”***

He denied it, saying, ***“I am not.”***

**26**One of the high priest’s servants, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, challenged him, ***“Didn’t I see you with him in the garden?”*** **27**Again Peter denied it, and at that moment a rooster began to crow.”

You know, Peter's greatest failure is heightened by the fact that at the Last Supper in Mark 14 Jesus said in verse 27, ***“You will all fall away,” Jesus told them, “for it is written:” “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.”***

And Peter's reply to Jesus in verse 29 ***“Peter declared, “Even if all fall away, I will not.” 30 “Truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times.” 31But Peter insisted emphatically, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” And all the others said the same.”***

It's not good that Peter failed the Lord, obviously, but it is good for us that this is recorded in Scripture because you and I fail the Lord. What God did in Peter's life, He can do in our lives. So, let's learn some lessons from Peter's greatest failure.

#### I. Beware of empty emotional outbursts.

"Lord, all of these other bums may fall away. I will not deny You. I will not fall away. With You, I am ready to go to prison and to death." Now, was he just blowing smoke, or did he mean that? He meant it. That was in his heart. But it was an empty and emotional boast. Judas deliberately betrayed Jesus. Peter denied Jesus in the heat of the moment. Judas was angry and bitter at Jesus. Peter wasn't. Peter loved the Lord with his whole heart, but he made an empty, emotional boast.

The Scripture says, First Corinthians 10:12, ***“Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”***

Now, what do we learn in this Last Supper dialogue between Jesus and Peter?

#### A. Arguing with Jesus is never a winning strategy.

"Even though all may fall away, yet I will not." And Jesus said to him, "Truly, I say to you, that you yourself this very night before a cock crow twice shall three times deny Me." But Peter kept saying insistently, "No, that's wrong, Lord.

Peter had already had an incident with the Lord in Matthew 16, where he declares, "You're the Christ, the Son of the living God." "Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven." Peter, you get a gold star. But in just a few verses later when Jesus said, "I'm going to be delivered over to the scribes and the elders and the chief priests. He's going to be beaten. He's going to be tried. He's going to be crucified, and on the third day rise again."

Peter hears that, and pulls Jesus over to the side, and he said, "God forbid it, Lord, this will never happen to You. You're the Christ, the Son of the living God. You're the Messiah. That doesn't happen to Messiah. So, he's arguing with Jesus. And what does Jesus say to Peter? "Get behind Me, Satan. You're not setting your mind on God's interests, but on man's interests."

Arguing with Jesus is never a winning strategy. If He tells you this is what's going to happen, you mark it down, that is what's going to happen.

**Now, did Peter have a choice in his denial of Jesus, or was it already set in stone that that was what was going to happen? Do we have free will, or is it all predestined this is what's going to happen?**

When the Bible talks about predestination, remember that God knows everything that's going to happen. Isaiah says He knows the beginning from the end. He's already seen this movie. He knows exactly what happens, but we still have a say."

Beware of arguing with Jesus. He is right concerning everything.

#### **B. Failing to pray has damaging consequences.**

We know that when Jesus went into the Garden of Gethsemane, He went in there to pray, and He wanted His disciples to pray, especially the three He took with Him. He leaves the eight at the entrance of the garden, then He takes with Him Peter and James and John. ***"Remain here with Me. Watch and pray. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."*** And then He goes about a stone's throw away, and He begins to pray. He gets up, and He checks on those guys, and they're sleeping.

And He does it three times. And every time He goes back, they are sleeping. It says in Matthew 26:40 and 41, ***"Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. 41"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." (NIV)***

Peter needed to be praying, but he was sleeping. Jesus had told him at the Last Supper, "Simon, Simon....Satan has desired to sift you as wheat, but I have prayed that your faith doesn't fail. And after you have converted, strengthen the brothers." Peter, get ready, you're getting ready to go into a time of testing and temptation. So, you need to be praying, but he was sleeping.

He makes an empty-emotional boast, and he can't back it up. And he's not praying. If anyone thinks he stands, take heed, lest he fall.

## II. Second lesson: Beware of the power of fear.

Judas sinned, we said, out of bitterness, out of frustration, out of resentment toward the Lord. He sinned the great sin of betrayal. Peter sinned the great sin of denial.

**Peter vs. Judas:** It seems to me that this is the critical difference between the two most luminous disciples in Jesus' company. Both Judas and Peter were enormously gifted people. Both were zealous disciples. Both failed Jesus profoundly. Yet one became isolated and died alone. The other remained in the community of other fallen disciples and found the grace he needed to become a new creation altogether.

Illustration: "Among the apostles, the one stunning success was Judas, and the one thoroughly groveling failure was Peter. Judas was a success in the ways that most impress us: he was successful both financially and politically. He cleverly arranged to control the money of the apostolic band; he skillfully manipulated the political forces of the day to accomplish his goal.

Eugene Petersen says, "And Peter was a failure in ways that we most dread: he was impotent in a crisis and socially inept. At the arrest of Jesus he collapsed, a hapless, blustering coward; in the most critical situations of his life with Jesus, the confession on the road to Caesarea Philippi and the vision on the Mount of transfiguration, he said the most embarrassingly inappropriate things. He was not

the companion we would want with us in time of danger, and he was not the kind of person we would feel comfortable with at a social occasion.

"Time, of course, has reversed our judgments on the two men. Judas is now a byword for betrayal, and Peter is one of the most honored names in the church and in the world. Judas is a villain; Peter is a saint. Yet the world continues to chase after the successes of Judas, financial wealth, and political power, and to defend itself against the failures of Peter, impotence and ineptness." (Petersen, Eugene. *Little House on the Freeway*, Tim Kimmel, pp. 191-192)

Peter loved the Lord, but fear caused him to do what he did. Fear is one of the chief tools of the devil. That's why it says in Second Timothy chapter 1, verse 7, ***"God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and discipline."***

Fear comes from the enemy. He traffics in fear. And the devil is going to use fear.

**A. Fear comes when we take our eyes off Jesus and take our eyes off His Word.**

Peter had done that before. You know, when he walked on the water with Jesus, he was doing great until he took his eyes off Jesus. "And seeing the wind, he became afraid, and he began to sink." Doing great with his eyes on Jesus...not so great when he put his eyes on the wind and saw the waves and went from saying, "This is wonderful," to saying, "This is impossible, help." Fear crept in.

**STORY:** I heard a story about 3 pastors who went fishing. They agreed on a lot of doctrine except one believed that miracles and gifts ceased with the apostles.

As they were fishing, they ran out of bait. One of the pastors said "I have more bait in my tackle box sitting on the shore. I'll go get it." He then proceeded to get out of the boat, walk to the shore, grab the box, and return. The doubtful pastor was speechless.

Soon they became thirsty, so the other pastor said "I have some drinks on the shore. I'll go get them." He then proceeded to get out of the boat, walk to the shore, grab the drinks, and return.

Suddenly the doubtful pastor was furious. "My faith is just as great as yours. If you can walk on water so can I." He proceeded to get out of the boat and immediately sank.



His two friends pulled him back in the boat, but he brushed them away and once again got out of the boat and sank. After 2 more attempts one pastor looked at the other pastor and asked, **“Do you think we should show him where the rocks are?”**

We combat fear in our own lives with the Word of God. We spiritually fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, and we remind ourselves what the Lord says in His word and what He promises us.

Isaiah 26:3, ***"And You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You because he trusts in You."*** That's a promise. God says, "I'll give you peace if you fix your mind on Me."

That's how we deal with fear. Mark chapter 4 when the storm came, the disciples were so afraid; "Lord, don't YOU care that we are perishing?" And Jesus says to the wind and waves, "Hush, be still," and it became perfectly calm. And He says to the disciples, "Why are you so afraid? How is it that you have no faith?" What is faith? "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." Faith is connected to the Word of God.

What does He mean by, "How is it that you have no faith?" He told them before He got in the boat, "We're going over to the other side." He didn't say, "We're going to go in the boat, and get in the middle of the Sea of Galilee and going to drown." That's not the word. The word is, "We're going over to the other side."

**You combat fear by putting your eyes on Jesus and clinging to His Word.** Peter is not doing that. So, fear comes when we take our eyes off Jesus and off His Word.

#### **B. Secondly: Fear causes us to say and do terrible things.**

Three times he denies Jesus. Now, we get a full picture when we see what Mathew, Mark, and Luke says. John says the least about all the specifics. He tells us what happened, but he doesn't give us a lot of specifics.

The first time it's a slave girl. Peter gets in the courtyard where Jesus is, and he's within eyeshot of Jesus.

And a servant girl, "You're one of His disciples." "Oh, I am not. I don't know what you're talking about. I do not know the man." First denial.

Then he leaves that area, and he goes over by the gate. And another comes up to him, and the Scripture says it was a maid, and she says, "Aren't you one of His disciples?" And he denies it.

And then the third person, a relative of Malchus, the slave of the high priest who got his ear cut off. Peter, no doubt, is thinking, this guy knows. He saw me. And, no doubt, his heart fills with fear. He's thinking he's going to be killed. Matthew says: ***After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, "Surely you are one of them; your accent gives you away."***

***74Then he began to call down curses, and he swore to them..."***

"And immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed, the Lord turned and looked at Peter. When he saw the Lord, and he remembered what He said, and he remembered his boast, and he remembered all the things that the Lord told him were going to happen, and how he failed his Lord, the one he loved, he went out and wept bitterly. Fear will cause you to do some terrible things and make some bad decisions.

**Illustration:** During his years as Premier of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev denounced the policies and atrocities of Joseph Stalin. Once, he was talking bad about Stalin in a public meeting, and Khrushchev was interrupted by a heckler from the crowd who shouted out, and said, "You were one of Stalin's associates!

Why didn't you stop him?" And Khrushchev looked out in the crowd, and he roared, "Who said that?" and it became quiet, and no one said a word, and no one moved a muscle. And then he said, "Now you know why I didn't speak up."

Fear! Why didn't people in Germany in the 30s speak up? Fear!

Currently, Christians stand and speak up for the truth in love, and we let the chips fall where they may. And if that means we lose our jobs, then we lose our jobs. If that means we lose friends, then we lose friends. If that means we lose our life, then we lose our life. And we say with the disciples, **"We cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard."**

**Beware of the tremendous power of fear.**

III. Remember the mercy and grace of the Lord.

A little fun fact for you: The main symbol of Christianity is the cross. But another symbol of Christianity is the fish. The early Christians would draw one line, and the other would draw another line and make the sign of the fish, the ichthys, and that would let people know that they were believers.

Another symbol of Christianity is the dove, a picture and symbol of the Holy Spirit. Maybe the lamb, for the Lamb of God who was slain.

But, you know, there's another symbol of Christianity. It was put on the steeples of many churches in England. Pope Nicholas I in the 800s A.D. that said he wanted a rooster on all the steeples in England. Why? Because they said the rooster is a call to repentance. The rooster reminds us that where sin abounds, grace does much more abound. And that darkness is defeated by the light.

Peter went out and wept bitterly. And, no doubt, he confessed his sin to God. And at the end of John's gospel, he has a one-on-one with Jesus. I heard one man refer to this occasion as a **Cookout for a Dropout**.

Go to John 21:1-23 The scene is the Sea of Galilee, to which the disciples have come in obedience to what Jesus said to Mary Magdalene after he rose from the dead, "Go and tell my disciples that I go before them to Galilee."

***After this Jesus revealed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he revealed himself in this way. Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples were together. Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go with you." They went out and got into the boat; but that night they caught nothing.*** {John 21:1-3}

***Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any fish?" They answered him, "No." He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, for the quantity of fish. That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his clothes, for he was stripped for work, and sprang into the sea. But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off.*** {John 21:4-8}

This is not the first time this miracle has happened. It happened in Luke 5 when Jesus called them to follow Him.

I'll tell you why Peter now jumps out of the boat and swims to Christ: This miracle catch of fish is taking Peter back to the moment of his calling; when he stopped fishing and became a fisher of men.

In Mark's gospel account they see the angel at the tomb, and Jesus has risen, and the angel says these words: "Go tell His disciples **and Peter**, He's not here; He has risen." He singles him out, "...and Peter." Why? Because Peter probably thought there's no way God can use him again. There's no way that I can ever be restored. But that wasn't true because of the mercy and grace of the Lord.

He needed this moment, because all he's been able to think about lately was how he had denied and failed Christ.

As Peter ran to the shore and the other disciples joined him, the text says, "They found there a charcoal fire." Why does he say they found a **charcoal fire**? The word "charcoal" is only used twice in the New Testament—here and in the story where Peter warmed himself in the courts and denied the Lord.

Aromas can bring back some unforgettable memories? I can't help but wonder if the smell of that charcoal fire brought Peter back to the charcoal fire where he had betrayed the Lord.

There are 3 invitations from Jesus that stand out in John's Gospel:

***"Come and see" "Come and drink" "Come and dine"***

Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast or Come and Dine; Come and eat."

Eating is a big theme in the Bible. In fact, someone imagined Adam saying, "Eve you've eaten us out of house and home."

The idea of sharing a meal is so important in the bible that some scholars have said that in the book of Luke, Jesus is either on his way to a meal, at a meal, or on his way back from a meal.

Let's be honest, we all love to eat. Some of you are hungry right now and can't wait for me to finish the message, so you can go to lunch. **But eating is not just about the food, it's more about the fellowship.**

**Illustration:** A little girl was being punished by eating alone in the corner of the dining room. The family paid no attention to her until they heard her pray, she said: "I thank you Lord, for preparing a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

Are you seeing a pattern here? Do you see what Jesus is doing? Jesus is walking with Peter right back to that bad decision, and the big failure in his life. Peter denied Jesus three times over a charcoal fire.

Peter must be thinking, "Well this isn't comfortable. I don't want to go here. I don't want to talk about that." You see, grace doesn't just bury sin in the past. It unearths it. Jesus brings it into the light, and it doesn't feel good, and it won't feel good in your life either. There may be tension in your heart right now as you're thinking about it. Confessing or talking about sin doesn't sound like a good thing. Jesus walks him right back in, and they face it.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep." {John 21:15-17}

## **CONCLUSION:**

Maybe what's needed in your life right now is you need a good meal. I'm not talking about lunch in a few minutes. I'm talking about receiving the grace you need to overcome your failures.

Grace is Jesus saying, "Come and have breakfast. Come and be with me. Come and be loved." Just so you know this, because there can be confusion on this, this grace is not a way of Jesus saying, "It's okay. Don't worry about it. Those sins don't matter. That wasn't a big deal." Grace doesn't mean that our sin is okay. Sin is never ok. That's not what this is. Jesus can do this because of his death on the cross which has already dealt with all our sin.

Grace is unmerited favor, and it's also the enabling power of God. It's not just to cover our sins and blot out our blunders. God's grace is not a security blanket that gives us excuses when we need it to live less than perfect lives. God's grace also enables His power to be at work within us. If you don't come under His grace, the past will keep pulling you back; regret will fill your life.

I don't know what's in your past, but you do, and God does. And you're kind of stuck, because you say, "I don't think I can go forward because I had an abortion, because I committed this sexual sin, because I committed this other sin, and that other sin, and this terrible thing," or whatever it might be. Listen! It was terrible. There's no white washing what Peter did. But the blood of Jesus, God's Son can cleanse from all sin. He can forgive. He can restore. We can trust Him and rejoice.

I see people wrestle with this all the time. They say, "I've made too many mistakes. I'm not qualified for ministry or leadership," or, "I'm not qualified to serve," or, "My past is too much. God can't love me anymore." If that's you, you need to hear this. God doesn't erase the past. He does something far, far better. He redeems it and uses it to build a life of significance. What you would call a past sin, he will use as the bedrock for a life of true significance and change. He can redeem it. Whatever it is, whatever you carry, no matter how bad it is, Jesus can redeem it.

Ephesians 2:8 says, ***“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God...”***

**Key Take Away - The Lord can forgive the worst of sins and restore the worst of sinners.**

Just so you know, God wasn't done with Peter. He denied Jesus at the point in Jesus' life where He needed him most, but he had strength to stand in Acts chapter 2, chapter 3, chapter 4, and chapter 5. He was changed. The Lord can forgive and restore the worst of sinners.