

2 Timothy - Part 21

Now someone right now is asking the question, "*What about Peter's denial?*"¹ *Can a true believer deny Jesus?* Well, let us face up to it. We probably have done something similar to what Peter did at one or even several times in our lives. We all do it in various ways when we are not willing to declare our love for Christ in certain situations, such as when having a conversation about religion with family members or good friends or even when asked a direct question about how you can be so sure that your God is the only God? We hear so many people today comment that we should all respect the gods that other people believe in.

Well, we are here to tell you that is a lot of modernistic doo-doo. God and Jesus have no respect whatsoever for the gods of other religions. In fact they detest such false teaching. **There simply are no other gods anywhere.** These claims are simply ludicrous.² Yet billions of people subject themselves to eternal damnation by accepting the foolishness and inconsistencies in their primary religious books. **The Bible is without blemish or flaw.** It is a masterpiece given to us by God so that we will know how He wants us to live. If you pattern your life after the teaching of the Bible, you will find **peace and freedom** even in the middle of serious threatening events. The other so-called "*holy books*" are filled with inconsistencies, lies, deceit, and some even support violent behavior and the right of a man to beat and even murder women. If all these other religions have the same God, why would He have so many conflicting instructions to different people? How do you explain that? If all these gods are actually the same god, would He not expect the same things from all people?

Now **there is one final irrefutable truth and that is that Jesus Christ was and is God** and was willing to come to earth to be the perfect sacrifice for sin so that men and women could be reconciled to God as sinless and be given salvation as a gift by God. **All the other gods that people give their allegiance to are still in their graves** or never were living beings. **Jesus Christ is the only God that rose from the dead** as witnessed by over 500 people, and then after several weeks ascended into Heaven. That means He walked and talked with many after He came out of the grave. No other deity can match that feat. And that should prove to us that if Christ came back from the dead and promised we could do the same, it will happen if we have a genuine faith in what He accomplished on our behalf.

Confronted by the reality of having abandoned the Lord when his life was threatened, Peter for the moment was captured by fear, and you might remember that the **Holy Spirit** was not yet available. In fact Jesus had not yet been crucified and resurrected proving that He was who He said He was. So Peter denied he knew Christ because he did not yet have that power of the Holy Spirit within him; but after he had denied Jesus three times he was overcome with shame and

¹ Matthew 26:69-75.

² **ludicrous** adjective **synonyms** LAUGHABLE, comic, comical, droll, farcical, funny, ridiculous; **related words** absurd, foolish, preposterous, silly; antic, bizarre, grotesque. *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Thesaurus*.

remorse³ and wept bitter tears of penitence.⁴

Matthew 26:75:

⁷⁵ *And Peter remembered the word which Jesus had said, "Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.*

Then later Jesus forgave Peter and restored him in Galilee.

John 21:15-17 (NLT):

¹⁵ *After breakfast Jesus asked Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, **do you love me more than these?**" "Yes, Lord," Peter replied, "you know I love you." "**Then feed my lambs,**" Jesus told him.*

¹⁶ *Jesus repeated the question: "Simon son of John, do you love me?" "Yes, Lord," Peter said, "you know I love you." "Then take care of my sheep," Jesus said.*

¹⁷ *A third time he asked him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, "Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you." Jesus said, "Then feed my sheep.*

Sounds to us like Peter was genuinely saved, but he had not yet learned and put into practice Jesus' full teaching. And until **Pentecost**, Peter did not have **the fullness of the Holy Spirit**. After the Holy Spirit became available to live in him and all believers according to the New Covenant, "*his courage, boldness, and willingness to face any hostility became legendary.*"⁵

Acts 1:3-8:

³ *To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.*

⁴ *Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me;*

⁵ *for John baptized with water, but **you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit** not many days from now."*

⁶ *So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?"*

⁷ *He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;*

⁸ *but **you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;** and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."*

³ **remorse:** a gnawing distress arising from a sense of guilt.

⁴ **penitence** *noun*, regret for sin or wrongdoing; sorrow for sins or faults.

⁵ John MacArthur, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary – 2 Timothy*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 63-66.

“Tim Tankosic is a free-lance writer and former drug addict with a medical degree and extensive counseling experience. He earns his living as a ‘minder’, a sober companion who accompanies movie and rock stars who have drug or alcohol problems. He is hired to stick to the stars like glue, making sure they are never alone or accessible to those who might slip them drugs or drink. He explains, ‘The point is to be a rock, a friendly face, a reminder of recovery, a safe person.’

“During off-hours, Tankosic said, he tries to make sure the star has fun, although he steers him or her clear of ‘slippery places’—any locale where drugs or alcohol are available.

“Another minder’ said discretion is a critical part of the job. ‘I’m like a wisp of smoke,’ he said.

“Tankosic once attended a party and watched a beautiful woman expertly smuggle a pack of drugs to his client. It was exactly the kind of temptation he was hired to ward off.

“He was relieved when the actor handed him the unused drugs as they left the party—no hassle, no fuss.

“I said: ‘Thanks for doing the right thing’,” said Tankosic.

God has not left us alone, instead He has given us the Holy Spirit to remind us to walk in holiness.”⁶

We would also recommend you read Acts 2:14-36; 3:1-6, 12-26; 4:1-4, 8-13, 19, 21, and 31. Peter died a martyr,⁷ just as Jesus had foretold he would—faithful in the face of execution for his Lord (John 21:18-19). Tradition holds that, by his own request, he was crucified upside down, because he felt unworthy to die in the same manner as his Lord.⁸

Clement of Alexandria and Origen both suggest that Peter was in Rome, and Origen adds the belief that he was “*crucified head-downwards*” (Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* 2.15.2; 3.1.2). The tradition that Peter was crucified may be supported in John 21:18: “*when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall...carry thee wither thou wouldest not*” (KJV).⁹

“So perhaps the answer to the question of Peter's denial of Christ is that his was a momentary failure, followed by repentance. He did not as yet have the fullness of the Spirit, but during the rest of his life after Pentecost he boldly confessed Christ, even when it cost him his life.”¹⁰

Let us take a look at Matthew 10:33: “*Whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him*

⁶ Peter Kennedy, *Preaching Illustrations Vol 1.*, WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 290.

⁷ MARTYR The transliteration of a Greek word meaning “witness,” in particular one who gives his life for a cause. Trent C. Butler, ed., “MARTYR,” in *Holman Bible Dictionary*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: “MARTYR”.

⁸ John MacArthur, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary – 2 Timothy*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 63-66.

⁹ Walter A. Elwell and Philip W. Comfort, “PETER, The Apostle,” in *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 1024.

¹⁰ Ibid.

before My Father who is in heaven." There are many people who continually deny Christ and will do so right up until they die. They never repent and they harden their hearts against Jesus.

Acts 3:13-15:

¹³ *"The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered and disowned [denied]¹¹ in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him.*

¹⁴ *"But **you disowned (denied)¹² the Holy and Righteous One** and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,*

¹⁵ *but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses.*

Denying Jesus is the worst mistake you can make. Please, do not make that mistake!

Do Not Just Taste Salvation

2 Timothy 2:12 (continued)

"In 2004 the state of California ordered a chain of private schools in the state to stop handing out phony diplomas. Authorities seized the assets of the alternative high school program and asked a judge to stop the company's 30 schools from handing out 'high school diplomas' to students seeking a better life through education.

"Authorities contend the company charges it's primarily Latino students between \$450 and \$1450 for a ten week course, **based on a 54 page book that is filled with errors.** The book teaches students that Congress has two houses, the Senate for Democrats and the House for Republicans. The book **falsely claims** that the flag of the United States has not been updated to reflect the addition of Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico to the 'original' 50 states, giving the US a grand total of 53 states.

"The book also says World War II was fought between 1938 and 1942. The truth is the Second World War was fought between 1939 and 1945, though the United States did not enter the fight until 1941. All 50 states are represented on the flag. Puerto Rico is a territory, not a state.

"Though two other states are joining California to block the company from claiming their diplomas are "official," the company claims 78 locations nationwide and says it will continue to actively expand."¹³

¹¹ Brackets mine.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Jim Wilson, "TEACHING," in *More Fresh Illustrations*, (Austin, TX: WORDsearch Corp., 2008), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "TEACHING".

Teaching lies can ruin the lives of the uninformed; and many liars take advantage of these people by devious means, **convincing them** that the lies are true and that those who actually teach the truth are liars.

2 Timothy 2:12:

If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us.

We will be focusing particularly on the last half of the verse, “*If we deny Him, He also will deny us.*”

The most dangerous people who lead others to deny Christ are the “**false teachers**,” and there are many within the Church, as well as outside the Church. There were false teachers in the **first century Church** and there are many more in the **twenty-first century Church**. They can lead many people to deny Christ and accept their lies, and it does not matter whether the person comes from Yale or comes from jail, from Park Ave or a park bench. These false teachers are cunning and **can appeal** to those who want to **create their own god**.

In this way they can have for themselves a god who does not demand anything from them and will allow them their favorite sins.

2 Peter 2:1:

*But false prophets also arose among the people, just as **there will also be false teachers among you**, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.*

To those who claim to belong to God the Father and deny Christ the Son. John says:

1 John 2:22-23:

²² *Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.*

²³ *Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.*

In the present text, however, Paul's warning could include those who once claimed Christ but later **deny Him** when the cost of discipleship becomes too high.

John 6:66:

As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.

The writer of Hebrews has this to say about such **false** Christians:

Hebrews 6:4-6:

⁴ *For in the case of those who have once been **enlightened** and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made **partakers** of the Holy Spirit,*
⁵ *and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,*
⁶ *and then have fallen away, **it is impossible to renew them again to repentance,***
since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

We should note that **this passage makes no reference at all to salvation and eternal life. Those who have once been enlightened**, which simply means they have been informed about the truth of the message of God and Christ, are not referred to as being born again, made holy, or made righteous. None of the normal New Testament terminology for salvation is used here.¹⁴ Being enlightened could be compared to someone who comes to Village Church and hears the gospel message which tells them how they can receive salvation and eternal life in Heaven, as well as what will happen to them if they reject it.

The **"enlightenment"** that we just read about in Hebrews 6:4 has to do with the teaching of biblical truth, God's Word. **It means to be mentally aware of something**, to be instructed, informed. **It carries no suggestion of either belief or disbelief.**

When Jesus first came to Galilee to minister, He declared that He had come to fulfill a prophecy (prediction) of Isaiah that was made about 700 years before the coming of Christ. That would be like someone back in the 1300's making a prediction regarding our world today and having it come true. That would be quite remarkable, would it not? Here is the prophecy of Isaiah which Jesus fulfilled:

Isaiah 9:1-7 (NLT):

¹ *Nevertheless, that time of darkness and despair will not go on forever. The land of Zebulun and Naphtali will be humbled, but there will be a time in the future when **Galilee of the Gentiles**, which lies along the road that runs between the Jordan and the sea, **will be filled with glory.***

² *The people who walk in darkness will see a great light. For those who live in a land of deep darkness, a light will shine.*

³ *You will enlarge the nation of Israel, and its people will rejoice. They will rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest and like warriors dividing the plunder.*

⁴ ***For you will break the yoke of their slavery and lift the heavy burden from their shoulders.** You will break the oppressor's rod, just as you did when you destroyed the army of Midian.*

⁵ *The boots of the warrior and the uniforms bloodstained by war will all be burned. They will be fuel for the fire.*

⁶ *For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his*

¹⁴ John MacArthur, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Hebrews*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 141-149.

shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ His government and its peace will never end. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the LORD will make this happen!

“On Glasgow Green, a few years ago, at the conclusion of a gospel address given by a Christian, a man in the crowd asked permission to say a few words. Liberty having been granted, he spoke somewhat as follows: ‘Friends, I don’t believe what this man has been talking about. I don’t believe in hell; I don’t believe in a judgment; I don’t believe in a God, for I never saw one of them.’

“Then another man asked to be allowed to speak. Permission being obtained, he proceeded as follows: ‘Friends, you say there is a river running not far from this place, the River Clyde. There is no such thing; it is untrue. You tell me that there are trees and grass growing around me where I now stand. There are no such things, That also is not true. You tell me that there are a great many people standing here. Again I say that is not true; there is no person standing here save myself. I suppose you wonder what I am talking about, but I was born blind; I never saw one of you; and while I talk it only shows that I am blind, or I would not say such things. And you,’ he said, turning to the infidel, **‘the more you talk the more you expose your ignorance, because you are spiritually blind, and cannot see.’**”¹⁵

—*Prophetic News*

“All who saw and heard Jesus saw this ‘*great light*,’ but not all who saw and heard were saved. Seeing God’s light is one thing, seeing God’s light and accepting it is another.

¹⁵ Walter B. Knight, *Knight’s Master Book of New Illustrations*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1956), s.v. “Light,” WORDsearch CROSS e-book.