

Matthew 26:31-35 The Danger of Forsaking the Lord

Introduction: The disciples were in a dejected mood. They had been warned that Jesus would be killed. They were told during the Passover Supper that one of them would betray Him to the enemy. Judas was identified as the culprit and he left. They had eaten the Passover Supper and the Lord's Supper which pictured His death. They had now started back toward the Mount of Olives when Jesus dropped another bombshell. They would all forsake Him that night, verse 31.

I. The reason for the warning.

- A. He was not angry with them in any way.
 - 1. He did not rebuke them.
 - 2. He did not wish to make them feel bad.
- B. He simply wanted to prepare them for what was ahead.
 - 1. He wanted them to be informed in advance; they would forsake Him as He said.
 - 2. But He did not want them to think that the Devil had gotten the upper hand.
 - 3. He wanted them to know that this was in keeping with God's plan and God's will, verse 31; Zechariah 13:7.
- C. Furthermore He wanted them to know that He would still love them.
 - 1. He would not forsake them just because they would forsake Him.
 - 2. He would welcome them back to Himself and to His fellowship.
- D. He wanted them to know that He would arise again, verse 32.
- E. He wanted to make it easy for them to gather again to Him, verse 32.
 - 1. They were to meet Him in Galilee.
 - 2. He even told them which mountain to meet Him at, Matthew 28:16.
 - 3. He promised to meet them there and would go before them there.
 - 4. A few of them would see Him in Jerusalem after His resurrection, but the majority would not see Him until they got to Galilee.

II. Peter's boast.

- A. Peter boasted that he would never desert the Lord, verse 33.
 - 1. He simply did not know what pressures would come to bear on him. (He could not know.)
 - 2. Neither do we know what lies ahead for us. (We cannot know.)
- B. But there were some things Peter did know.
 - 1. He believed with all his heart that Jesus is the Christ, Matthew 16:16.
 - 2. He knew that he loved the Lord.
 - 3. He knew that he intended to serve the Lord faithfully and never stop as long as he lived. (That is the kind of intention we should all have.)

III. Our Lord's answer to Peter.

- A. Jesus said that before the cock would crow Peter would deny Him, verse 34. (Mark says, "Before the cock crow twice", Mark 14:30).
- B. Not only would Peter deny Him, but he would do so three times.
- C. And he would do so before morning.

IV. Peter's insistence.

- A. Would you believe Peter still insisted that he would never deny the Lord? Verse 35. (He said that he would die first.)
- B. So said all the disciples, verse 35. (But they all deserted Him, verse 56.)

V. The danger that exists today.

- A. If we had been there we would have done no better than they.
 - 1. Jesus said that all the disciples would desert Him.
 - 2. If men like Peter and Andrew, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew, James and Lebbaeus, and Simon the Canaanite deserted Him so would we.
- B. We do not know what pressures many come to bear on us.
 - 1. We do not know but what we may stop serving the Lord.
(Stop going to church, giving, studying the Bible, praying, witnessing.)
 - 2. Others have and we could – we might.
 - 3. We live in the time of the great falling away.
- C. If we, like Peter, rely on our own strength, then like Peter we will fail.
- D. We do know that He loves us.
 - 1. We may forsake Him but He will never forsake us.
 - 2. If we should fail Him in some way, He will never-the-less welcome us back into His fellowship.
- E. We need the prayers of one another lest we should fall away from service to the Master.
 - 1. Prayer changes things; prayer helps.
 - 2. Not prayer itself – but prayer puts us in contact with God and God changes things – God helps.
 - 3. Let us pray not only for ourself but for others.

Conclusion:

- 1. Are you saved? What are your intentions?
- 2. Are you willing to die for the Lord, as Peter was?
- 3. Are you willing to live for the Lord? What are your intentions?

Preached at Pleasant Hill 1-18-87 A.M.