



September 6th, 2026

Denials in the Dark

John 18:13-28

1. When you experience failure—either your own or someone else's—what are you most tempted to do: become angry, withdraw, defend yourself, blame someone, or something else?
2. The leaders were responsible for administering God's law, yet they were willing to violate that law in order to condemn Jesus. What does this teach us about the danger of trying to uphold God's law while simultaneously disregarding God's character?
3. In John 18:22-23 - When Jesus is struck, He doesn't retaliate, but neither does He remain silent about the injustice. What can we learn from Jesus about the difference between humility and passivity? (see also Peter's remembrance of Jesus in 1 Peter 2:22–23)
4. Peter had demonstrated genuine courage in the garden by confronting the armed crowd. What does his later denial teach us about the difference between momentary courage and enduring faithfulness?
5. How did Peter's self-confidence actually become a spiritual danger? How might "I would never do that" set someone up for failure?
6. What situations are most likely to tempt you to hide your allegiance to Christ—and what most haunts you? Is it fear of rejection, embarrassment, losing relationships, professional consequences, being mocked, or something else?
7. Why is it important that Peter's denial was not the end of his story? What does Peter's eventual repentance and restoration teach us about the relationship between serious failure, grace, and future usefulness?