



From

to

Declaration



Has there ever been a time when you felt it was best if someone didn't know your faith? Have you ever felt embarrassed to stand up for Jesus when everyone else was doing wrong? If so, you're in good company. Simon Peter had that problem. But he was also able to conquer it. Let's see how he did it.

Matthew 26:69-75—Here we see Peter at one of his weakest moments. But why was he so afraid? He had been in the same garden in which Jesus had found strength but it hadn't seemed to benefit Peter.

Mark 8:38—The Bible gives a solemn warning about denying Jesus.

Matthew 26:31-35—Peter was adamant that he would always stick up for Jesus. He knew he was a strong person and was determined to use his strength for Jesus even to the death.

The problem was that while Jesus entered His garden battle in anguish and surrendered His will to His Father, Peter entered his garden battle in human strength and continued to rely upon that strength.

Matthew 26:51-54—At this first trial of character Peter reacted by using his own strength (see, John 18:10) While Jesus relied on His heavenly Father's strength knowing that the power of Heaven was at his command.

Luke 22:59-62—As Peter heard the rooster and saw Jesus look of pity he finally realized that he couldn't go through life relying on his self resolve and strength.

So we see through looking at Peter that we are unable to stand for Jesus by relying on our own strength. But Peter didn't stay in his sin. When Jesus looked at him, he was cut to the heart and repented. Only a few short months later Peter had yet another opportunity to stand up for Jesus and this time he gave us an excellent example of for us to follow.

Moving from Denial to Declaration:

Acts 3:1-9—This time instead of relying on his own ability, Peter made it clear that Jesus, not Peter, had what the man truly needed.

Acts 3:11-12, 16—Before his conversion Peter probably would have basked in the glory but now he passed the Glory on to the right One. In case there was any question about whether Peter had learned his lesson, we see here that He clearly stated that it was Jesus, not Peter who did this miracle.

The Priests and temple guard arrested Peter and John and threw them in jail. The next day Peter and John were brought back into the same court that Jesus had faced when Peter had denied Him.

Acts 4:8-12—Notice that before, Peter wasn't even the one on trial yet he denied his Lord. But this time he was on trial yet he boldly declared his Lord. He declared that only through Jesus can anyone be saved.

Acts 4:19-20—The priests had nothing to say. They could not deny God's power so they threatened them and ordered them not to speak about Jesus again. Still Peter and John remained steadfast.

What's the Key?

Before: Peter's chief concern was self

After: Peter's chief concern was Jesus

Before: Peter declared own his ability to stay loyal to Jesus.

After: Peter declared His own inability and Jesus' ability.

Before: Peter called on his own strength to help Jesus.

After: Peter called on Jesus' strength to help the crippled man

Before: Peter was concerned about what others would think of him.

After: Peter was concerned about what Jesus would think about him.

Before: When the heat was on Peter denied Jesus out of self preservation

After: When the heat was on Peter declared Jesus out of love and true devotion.

Next steps:

1. Review the above "Before & Afters" and substitute your name for Peter's. Do you see yourself in any of the "Before" columns?
2. Surrender your "Before Columns" to Jesus so you can declare Him faithfully.